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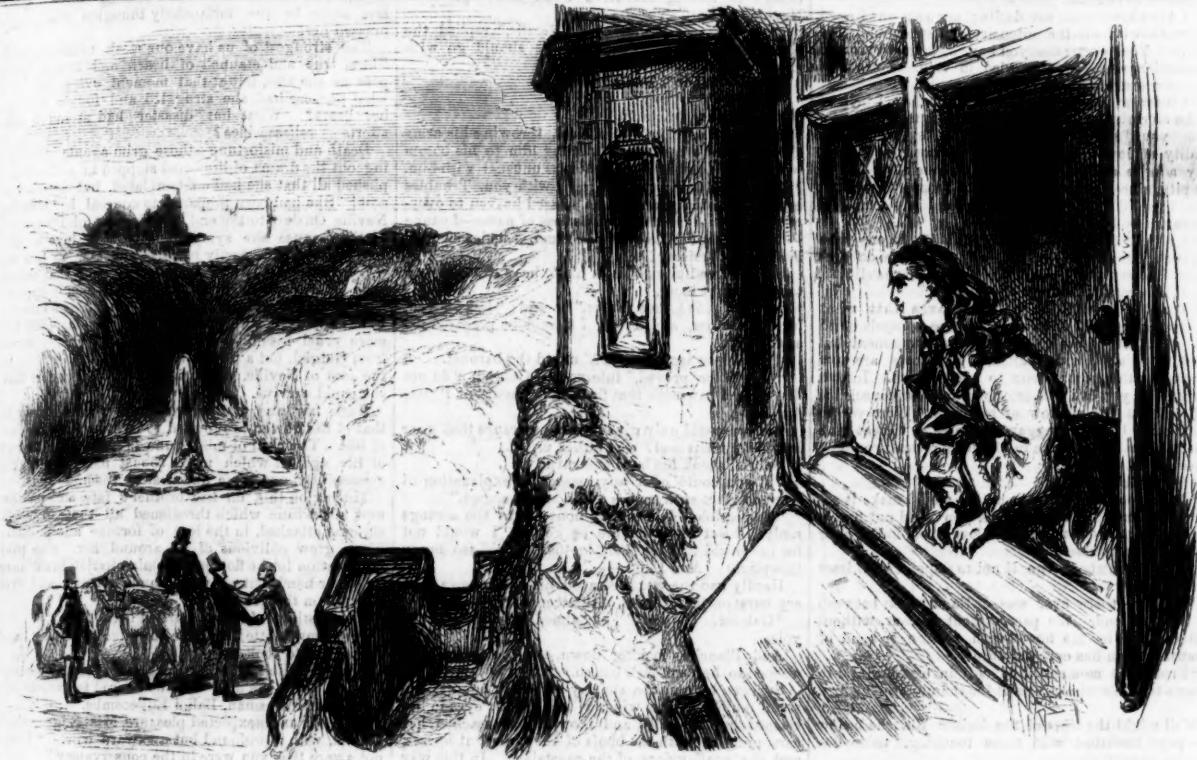
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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[ARRESTED FOR MURDER]

THE STRANGER'S SECRET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Seventh Marriage," "The Warning Voice," "Man and his Idol," &c.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE BETROTHED.

In her clenched hand she held the instrument
Had dealt this blow, this death-wound to her heart,
Was but a page written in a manly hand.

The Quiet Hour.

THE WARM, MORNING SUNSHINE FILLED THE GRAND OLD-FASHIONED CHAMBER WHICH BLANCHE SELWYN HAD OCCUPIED SINCE HER ARRIVAL AT THE MANOR HOUSE.

IT WAS ONE OF WHAT WERE CALLED THE STATE-ROOMS—ONE IN WHICH, THE LEGEND WENT, CHARLES STUART HAD HIMSELF LAIN, WHEN FLYING, A HUNTED FUGITIVE, THROUGH HIS OWN DOMINIONS. AND IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN SO, FOR THE ROOM WAS SPACIOUS AND IMPOSING ENOUGH TO HAVE LODGED Royalty EVEN AT ITS PROUDEST.

AT NIGHT THE ROOM ALWAYS INSPIRED BLANCHE WITH A SENSE OF AWE, AS SHE FLITTED ABOUT IT WITH HER BRIGHT-TANGLING HAIR FLOWING OVER HER SHOULDERS, OR PEEPED OUT FROM THE CURTAINS OF THE ANTIQUE BED WHICH IN POINT OF SIZE AND APPEARANCE MIGHT HAVE DONE DUTY AS A ROYAL PAVILION ON A FIELD OF BATTLE.

SEEN IN THE MORNING LIGHT, THE ROOM WAS FAR FROM REPULSIVE. TREES RUSTLED AT THE LATTICED WINDOWS, AND ABOVE A SEA OF FOLIAGE, THE EYE COULD COMMAND A VIEW OF MILES OF COUNTRY ONLY BOUNDED BY THE SHINING SEA.

HEADLESS OF THE ROOM AND OF ALL AROUND IT ON THIS PARTICULAR MORNING, BLANCHE SAT UPON THE COUCH AT THE FOOT OF THE BED, SHEDDING SILENT TEARS OVER A LETTER WHICH LAY OPEN IN HER LAP, HELD THERE BY ONE WHITE TREMULOUS HAND.

IN A DISTANT CORNER OF THE ROOM BLANCHE'S MAID WAS BUSILY ENGAGED IN PACKING BOXES, READY FOR ONE OF THE FOOTMEN TO CORD AND DIRECT. ABSORBED IN THIS OCCUPATION—IN FOLDING RICH DRESSES, SHAWLS AND LACES, ARRANGING TRINKETS AND SO FORTH—SHE SCARCELY NOTICED HER MISTRESS'S EMOTION.

Next to the immediate business of packing, the thought uppermost in the maid's mind was that they were going to leave that day for town, Lord Englestone having resolved to bring the visit at the Manor House to a close. This fact was also engaging the mind of the fair Blanche; but it was in connection with the letter she had received some half-hour before, and the contents of which greatly distressed her.

The letter was in the handwriting of Gabriel Edgcombe. It exhibited signs of strong emotion on the part of the writer. The hand which traced some of the lines had trembled with the feeling expressed, and here and there were the evidences of uncontrollable tears.

It ran in these terms:—

"MY DEAR BLANCHE—for so I will enjoy the luxury of calling you once more ere I die!—before you quit my father's roof it is due to you that I should write these words of explanation and farewell.

"The dream of my life is at an end.

"The fondly cherished hope of my boyhood—the anticipated happiness of my youth—all, all has vanished. The dark fate of my race closes about me. Thank God you are without the hideous circle. Had you returned my love with equal intensity, nothing could have saved you.

"I feel this now, most deeply, and again I thank God.

"The confession forced from your lips last night only puts the seal to what had become inevitable. Had I thought of my duty more than of my love, everything might have been different. Your happiness might have been secured, while life could hardly have become a greater burden to me that it must now be to the end of my days. Unfortunately, love—hot, impetuous, and unreasonable—blinded me to everything, even to a sense of what was due to the object of my adoration.

"Yes, Blanche, strange as it will sound in your ears, the consuming passion of my heart rendered me cruel and unjust to you. Knowing what I knew of myself—and what I cannot even now set down in words—I should have nursed my martyr with the silence of my own breast. But it is

boy to conceal its emotions; and when I believed that my affection was returned by the object of it, I was powerless.

"Oh, Blanche, how was it that during long years I never discovered what is so clear to my heart and my understanding now?

"I should have seen that you were only acceding to your father's wish that through us our families should be united.

"I should have understood that I was simply not objectionable to you—not more objectionable than the crowds who thronged around you, and basked in the sunshine of your smiles, and were no more to your heart than the pet fawns eating from your hands in Englestone Park.

"In a word I should have gathered that your heart was as yet untouched—that you knew nothing of love, but from the experience of others. It should have been clear to me that the courtesies with which you returned my passionate devotion were prompted by duty, by the kindness of your nature, and not by your heart.

"Could I have seen this I might have been prepared for what was certain to happen. Inevitably, as I might have known, the hour must come, when the torpid heart would wake at the touch of love, as the stony lips of the statue of Memnon reared in the desert, breathe music when warmed by the first beams of the rising sun.

"The hour came and you loved.

"From your own lips I have listened to that avowal, and from the depths of my crushed and lacerated heart I thank you for the utterance of it. Only a true woman could have nerveed herself to the confession made to me last night. Terrible as it was to my ears, I listened to it with a feeling approaching satisfaction. Thousands of women have gone down to their graves with secrets such as this gnawing upon their hearts and undermining the vital principle of their lives.

"Your sex regard them, shall I say cherish the memory of them, as martyrs?

"But what is the courage of a woman who conceals such a secret to that of her who confesses it to one in



whose eyes she has hitherto read only passionate adoration; but who from that moment will overwhelm her with scorn, contempt, reproaches, curses?

"I speak of the ordinary usage of your sex by mine."

"No, Blanche, I do not scorn or condemn you; I do not reproach, do not curse. I bend my head before stern necessity. I see the bark of my happiness shattered by the winds and waves, and my only reflection is that it was exposed to a force against which it was powerless to contend."

"I have loved you, my darling, my own—as I once believed—with all the intensity of a strong subdued nature. You tell me that you have struggled to return my passion, and you struggled in vain. You admit that your heart is in the grave of another."

"I utter no word of blame or resentment. I believe in the sincerity of your sympathy with me; I appreciate your struggles to give that sympathy the vitality of love; I suffer, but I do not complain; I only admire and pity you. Yes, Blanche, you want my pity, since that love which might have irradiated your life did but overshadow it, and has found its premature end in the grave."

"I pity, I forgive—small magnanimity in one who has such need of forgiveness!—and now there only remains for me to utter the one sad word—farewell!"

"It is necessary that we should part."

"Perhaps I ought to thank Heaven that what appears in the light of adverse fortune compels us to that step. It spares us not only embarrassment but absolute pain; besides, all my prospects are now uncertain; things may tend to good or evil. In this uncertainty you can withdraw with a clear conscience and without the shadow of reproach. Were you to wait until I am a beggar or until a violent and shameful death stares me in the face, retreat would be impossible."

"Impossible?"

"Yes; your sympathetic nature would make it so. You could not fly from distress, you could not find it in your heart to desert one who loved you, in the hour of his supreme misery."

"Go then, Blanche; go, if not to happiness, at least to freedom."

"All that there ever was of tie or union between us is at an end. We part without rancour, without coldness, and let me hope, with a stronger bond of sympathy than has ever united us."

"From this moment it is only in memory and in dreams that Blanche can exist for the unhappy

"GABRIEL."

Well might the tears of the forlorn Blanche bedew the page inscribed with these touching, these despairing words.

She could have endured severity, reproach or bitter recrimination. It was the absence of all this which made the letter so acutely painful to her. Deeply now did she regret the confession of her heart's secret which she had permitted herself to make to Gabriel. What if he did suspect the truth? Before the absolute admission of her own lips it was possible that the relations in which they stood should remain undisturbed. But not now.

In obeying the impulses of her own ingenuous heart and bespeaking his sympathy on the ground of absolute candour, therefore, she had brought about the catastrophe.

She had severed herself from his side.

In this his hour of trial and suffering she had rendered it impossible for her to offer him even the consolation of her expressed sympathy.

They had parted.

Had an ocean flowed between them they could not have been more widely sundered.

Oh, what a cruel, strange, capricious thing is this passion which we call love! Surely it is more nearly allied to the Furies than to the graceful and tender deities from whom it derives its fabled birth? We look to it for bliss and it yields us agony. We revel in the intoxication of its so-called delights and find that they yield us only feverish unrest and heart-ache. Without love we should be ignorant of the supreme happiness of which life is capable; but then, without love, the heart would never fathom the depths of its own bitterness and power of suffering.

Some such reflections occupied the mind of Blanche Selwyn as she sat with the open tear-stained letter before her, but they took no definite form.

She gave utterance only to some yearning towards duty—prompted more by sympathy than principle.

"Oh, if I could but love him!" she murmured. "If I could but love him! I would give my life to love him, and I cannot, I cannot."

The perturbed course of the reflections following was disturbed by the sound of horses' hoofs on the smooth gravel path under the window.

Almost by instinct Blanche rose, approached the open casement, and looked out.

Two mounted police constables met her gaze, and between them there was a big, grey mare, ready

saddled, one that evidently did not belong to the Manor House stables.

Several of the house servants, including Podwink the butler, and the footmen, were standing round, with an uneasy and puzzled look.

While Blanche remained at the window, Sir Noel Edgecombe came forth, accompanied by Gabriel.

"The coroner has issued his warrant for the committal of my son?" said Sir Noel.

"Yes, sir," replied one of the constables. "On the charge of having murdered John Harwood, alias Neville Onslow."

"Spare us the recital of the details," replied the baronet. "It is necessary that he should go with you?"

"Or his bail will be forfeited."

Gabriel stepped to the front.

"I am ready," he said.

"My poor boy," cried Sir Noel, throwing his arms about the lad's neck and straining him to his bosom with a degree of emotion that was unusual with him. "I could find it in my heart to go with you. Troubles never come singly, and it has pleased heaven to overshadow us with calamity. The loss of name—fortune—my only son! Was ever man crushed under such an avalanche of misery!"

Gabriel freed himself from his father's embrace and took his right hand.

"Do not pine for me, father," he said; "but for you, for my mother, and Flora, I should be prepared for any fate."

"But if you are innocent?" urged the baronet.

"It will be proved," interrupted Gabriel, "do not doubt it. I have still that faith in a beneficent Providence."

"If you could only give us the assurance that your hands are unstained?" the father urged.

Gabriel shook his head mournfully.

"If you could offer any reasonable explanation of your conduct such as the world might accept."

"Impossible. I can offer none," was the strange reply. "But come, let me be going. I would not for the world that my lady mother should see me in this plight. And Flora—"

Hardly had the words escaped his lips before a loud cry burst on the stillness of the scene.

"Gabriel! Gabriel!" exclaimed an impassioned voice.

And Blanche, looking down, saw that Flora was clasped to her brother's bosom.

Stricken by remorse, she lay her cheek against the stone mullion of the window, and hid her eyes in her clasped hands. Sobs and interjections reached her ears, mingled with the hoofs of the impatient horses, and the gruff voices of the constables. In this way she was conscious that the painful scene in which she ought to have taken part came to a close; that the last words were spoken, the last hand-clasp exchanged, that then there followed a scuffling and trampling of horses, followed by a dead silence, and that the parent was over.

Gabriel was gone from the house a prisoner.

And she was pressing her soft cheek into the rough corrugated stone, and moaning feebly and despairingly to herself.

"If I could only have loved him! If I could have loved him, all, all would have been well!"

Her face sank upon her hands, and she burst into a paroxysm of tears.

So the betrothed lovers parted.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE UNWELCOME SUITOR.

Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have
Some patient leisure to excuse myself.

Richard III.

OVERCOME with emotion at the departure of Gabriel in the custody of two officers, Flora Edgecombe retired to the conservatory, adjoining the principal drawing-room, where she hoped to indulge her grief unseen.

This had become the most solitary spot in the house.

Recent events had put a stop to everything like festivity. The Manor House, usually full of visitors, was well nigh deserted, and the state rooms were as blank and neglected as if the family had been absent.

It was the duty of the gardeners to attend to the conservatory, which constituted such an ornament to the drawing-room, and they did it. The place glowed with rich and variegated blooms, and a delicious odour filled the atmosphere; but the beauty and the perfume of the flowers were alike wasted. Seldom did one of the family invade the quiet of the place, and now as Flora entered it, her foot-fall had a hollow and startling sound.

The autumn flowers were there in rich abundance. Exquisite azalias glowed in starry bloom of every hue, only rivalled by the carefully-trained pelargonium

—as our old household friend the geranium is dubbed in its cultivated and aristocratic shape—calceolarias of all hues, the golden and spotted prevailing, were there in abundance, orange trees, bearing fruit, asters of various kinds, late roses, and conspicuous for richness and breadth of effect, the gorgeous rhododendron, with its purple flower in huge masses.

Observing all this mechanically, as a matter of habit rather than by any exercise of her will, Flora, true and staunch of heart, and firm of purpose as she was, felt at that moment overcome. To what purpose had she struggled and fought against her heart? What but disaster had attended her efforts of self-sacrifice?

Death and misfortune—those grim agents in working out the drama of life—had stepped in and accomplished all that she had contemplated, but at what a cost! She had been prepared to conceal her love for Neville Onslow to the end for the sake of Blanche—partly because she sympathized with a love so devotedly returned, partly because she saw in this an effectual mode of saving the fair girl from that union with Gabriel which Flora would not openly oppose, but which she had her reasons for dreading so much. Death had dealt with the question in another and far more cruel fashion; Blanche was effectually saved from Gabriel, but a blight had fallen on her life, in the loss of Neville, which it was hardly possible that she could survive.

Such fair and fragile creatures, whose beauty is that of the flower, are formed to bask in the sunshine of life. The chill of misfortune is fatal; the storms of life, against which more robust natures struggle successfully, overcome and destroy them.

Musing on this, on her brother's fate, and on the new misfortune which threatened all those to whom she was attached, in the loss of fortune and position, Flora grew oblivious of all around her. She paid no attention to the flowers blooming in rich luxuriance on either hand, but sat with hands crossed and eyes riveted on the ground.

The rustling of leaves startled her.

A shadow blotted out the sunshine at her feet, and caused her to look up.

With a feeling of repugnance, her eyes met those of Cheney Tofts, the man who had dared to assume the name of her kinsman, Baliol Edgecombe.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Miss Edgecombe," he said, with a profound but awkward bow. "I was not aware that you were in the conservatory."

It was not the truth, as he had seen her enter it; but Tofts did not trouble himself about trifles.

"What a charming place it is!" he exclaimed, before Flora had time to reply. "Delightful flowers! You're fond of flowers?"

"Thank you—yes."

She half rose as she spoke, with the clear intention of quitting the conservatory.

"I'm intruding?" cried Tofts. "Beg pardon. Quite unintentional. Don't go. Just looking round—that's all. Jove, now, what do you call these?"

He had his hat and umbrella in hand as if about to take a walk, and while speaking he poked the ferrule of the umbrella into the delicate, wax-like bloom of a superb orchid—one of the singular class of flowers that Nature seems to have made in a freakish moment to caricature her more sober productions. Orchids are to flowers what the mocking-bird is among the feathered races. The bloom of this specimen had the semblance of a gorgeous butterfly.

"I am sure you will pardon me—" Flora said.

And this time she fairly rose from her seat.

"I see. A little high and mighty," interrupted Tofts. "Expected as much, between ourselves. The fact is, Miss Edgecombe—by the way I ought to call you cousin, but you might object?"

"I should."

"At present. Well, it may be a little premature. But as I was saying, the fact is, I don't feel quite at my ease in this place since recent events, and yet you know, it wouldn't do for me to quit it. And, to come to the truth at once, I rather look to you to smooth matters between the elderly parties and myself."

The face of the beautiful woman addressed cringed with indignation.

"To me?" she said, haughtily.

"Well—yes."

"You forgot, sir," Flora replied, "that my brother has just been conveyed from this house on a charge affecting his life, and that you, his guest, were the man to prefer that charge."

"You forgot that it was my friend who perished at his hands."

"As you believe."

"And as Gabriel himself does not venture to deny," retorted Tofts.

A pained expression passed like a spasm over the exquisite, half-averted face.

"It is cruel! cruel!" she gasped, rather speaking to herself than addressing the man before her.

"If I am wrong, I know that no apology I can offer will be sufficient to atone for the step I have taken," said Tofts; "but if I am right? What then?"

"Pray excuse me," said Flora, as if about to quit the conservatory, "it is a question I can hardly be expected to discuss at this moment. Especially," she added, losing for a moment the contemptuous coolness she had maintained up to this point, "more especially with a person whom I cannot regard in any other light than as an enemy to my family and to myself."

She turned and would have gone.

Tofts detained her.

"You are mistaken," he said, "in both respects—particularly the latter. I am no enemy of yours—on the contrary, it is my sincere wish to retain your friendship, if not to inspire you with stronger feeling."

"You have done so," replied Flora, her lips white and quivering.

"Jove! No? You don't mean that I have been fortunate enough to make an impression—to have awaked any feeling?"

"Yes."

"Of tenderness?"

"No. Of contempt. Let me pass, sir; let me escape from this place!"

An angry flush came into the face of Cheney Tofts.

"First, hear me," he said; "I have a few words to say to you, but they may be worth your listening to. You are naturally angry with me—what woman wouldn't be in your place? The man that comes to reduce your family to poverty, and who doesn't hesitate about handing your brother over to the police to take the consequences of a criminal act, isn't likely to meet with a very good reception at your hands. But I hope to prove to you that I'm not half so bad as I seem, and that I'm disposed to act toward you as few men in my position would do."

She interrupted him with a movement of impatience.

"In a word," he resumed, "I love you, cousin."

The face which Flora turned upon the audacious Tofts would have striken another dumb.

"Sir!" she cried, indignantly.

"I repeat," Tofts resumed, not at all moved, "that I love you. From the moment we first met I admired you. I did; really, truly admired you. I said to myself, 'Jove! Here's the *beau ideal* I've been looking for. Here's the woman!' I said so to my poor friend Neville, as he would tell you if he was alive, dear boy! And he was of my opinion—quite. Fact, there couldn't be two words about it, and my own opinion is that he thought more highly of you than he ever ventured to say, even to me. But that's neither here nor there. The point is this, that whatever had happened, I should have spoken out, and after what has happened—"

"Let me go, sir!" cried Flora, unable to restrain her disgust and indignation.

"When you have heard—"

"I have heard too much, already. You have no right to detain me. Stand aside, before I call for help!"

"No. For your own sake, no."

He folded his arms and remained where he was standing, between two rows of clustering flowering plants.

The outraged woman looked helplessly around her. There was no retreat until Tofts chose to stand aside.

The fellow saw this, and availing himself of the accident, went on:

"I say," he proceeded, "that for your own sake, for your own good, I must decline to retire until you have heard the few words I have to say. Had I failed to obtain proofs of my rights as the heir to the Edgecombe estates, I should have thrown myself on your clemency and asked you to accept one who was your inferior in fortune, in consideration of my devoted attachment. As it is, I am in a position to put the matter in a light which will, I am sure, raise me in your estimation and increase my chances of success. I should mention, by the way, that I have your father's permission to address you as I am doing."

"Is this true, sir?" Flora suddenly demanded.

"Quite."

"What! Sir Noel gave you permission to offer these insults to his daughter?"

"Well, he didn't put it in that way, exactly. As a man of sense—"

"Did he sanction what you are now doing?"

"He did."

Flora buried her face in her handkerchief, and a sigh, almost a sob, escaped her.

"As a man of the world," Tofts continued, "he saw that my conduct was gentlemanly and disinterested. I told him of my attachment, I laid bare my heart, so to speak, and I said frankly and openly, as it is in my nature to be, 'Noel,' I said, 'you can hardly compromise yourself by uniting your branch of the

family with ours. The Balios—we've borne the same Christian name generation after generation for three centuries—are the Edgecombes, as you know. Well, now, I, a Balio, ask you to permit me to offer my suit to your daughter, who, so far as I know, is free to accept me. What'll be the consequence? Though I take my place as the head of the family, you will have established a sort of right to be maintained in proper style and dignity, through your daughter becoming my wife."

Flora shuddered.

"The old gentleman saw this in a moment. How could he help doing so? Here was a way of reconciling my claims and his interests."

"No," interposed Flora, with abrupt energy, "I will not think so meanly of my father as to believe that he would have heard this infamous proposal to the end."

Tofts had hardly expected this rebuff—believing that he was rather making way than otherwise—and it staggered him.

"Wait till I have established my claim," he said, with the coarseness natural to him, "and you will tell all a different tale."

She did not reply.

"Wait till I have taken my position as master here, and you, and those about you, quit the Manor House, to wander away, God knows where; and you will think differently of the 'infamous' proposal with which an honourable man so disgusts you."

Still no reply.

"But," cried Tofts, losing both his patience and his temper, "before that time comes let me give you a word of warning. Your father is wise enough to see in what direction his interests lie. But that is not all. Apart from this there is a secret reason, which I dare not confide to you, that makes his safety—his reputation—his life—depend on your answer."

"How? What is this?"

She spoke at last and with some warmth.

"I have said that I cannot explain, I can only hint at the cause which more than any other has moved Noel in this matter. Had you listened to me more in the spirit I had a right to expect, this fact would have remained buried in my own breast. As it is, you have forced it from me. It may come with an ill grace—it does do so, I know—but I can't afford to consider that. All's fair in love as in war, and I love you well to think of anything but of how I may make you mine."

With this declaration he bowed and quitted the conservatory.

Flora Edgecombe stood rooted to the spot, looking after him with a vacant stare.

What was this dreadful secret of which the man had spoken?

Her father's safety—her father's life involved in the keeping of it? What did it mean?

"He cannot have invented such a thing?" she gasped.

And then she gave herself up to vague feelings of dread, terror and foreboding, that made her very heart sick within her.

CHAPTER LV.

FLORA'S DISCOVERY.

Is it thy lot, oh woman
To suffer evermore,
To serve, to aid, to bless, to save,
But suffer—evermore? — *Ballad.*

In her distress at the words her unwelcome suitor had used, Flora's first and most natural impulse was to fly to her mother for an explanation of the mystery and for counsel and consolation.

But her heart failed her.

Lady Edgecombe was a fond, a doting mother, but she was not sympathetic, nor was hers a breast on which a child could lay her head and pour out the secrets of her heart.

Her ladyship had been spoiled both by her education and the position she had since held.

It was her pride to regard herself and to be regarded as a woman of the world. This meant, in her mind, a clever, brilliant, diplomatic woman; with plenty of tact, infinite politeness and address, and all the qualities necessary for shining in and leading society. In her creed society and its claims were everything; what society demanded must be conceded, what society condemned was unpardonable. The feelings were all very well—if properly regulated and toned down to the requirements of society. The passions doubtless had their uses, or they would hardly have been implanted by God in the human breast—but of course they must be kept within the limits set them by society.

This explanation is necessary because it well accounts for a certain stolidness and want of womanly, or rather motherly, feeling which will have been apparent in some passages of this narrative.

It should be added that her ladyship was devoted

to the baronet, for whom, however, she entertained no great admiration. It was as the head of the house, the source of the family greatness, that she honoured him and paid true allegiance to him; but personally, she knew that he was her inferior in intellect, in ambition, and in a good many qualities to which society attaches a great and often an excessive value.

It was upon her ladyship's advice that the claims of Neville Onslow as a lover for Flora had been considered. The reader will by this time have mastered sufficient of the Manor House mystery to see that the one dark cloud in the otherwise cerulean sky of the Edgecombes, was the constant fear lest Balio Edgecombe's son—the young Balio of whose fate they were never able to learn anything—should suddenly present himself and claim his own.

The appearance of Neville Onslow at the Manor House had aroused that slumbering apprehension.

His likeness to the portraits of the Edgecombes had struck her ladyship instantly.

A certain resemblance between him and Gabriel had, it will be remembered, impressed itself even on the mind of the girl Ruth.

The fear thus re-awakened was fed by successive occurrences daily from the moment that Neville entered the Manor House.

At last, the baronet, his lady, and Doriani, who was in their secret, had agreed that there could be no question about the fact—Neville Onslow they decided was young Balio Edgecombe.

Then the question arose—Did he know it?

Was he conscious of his real name, position and claims?

Everything went to show that he was. To those who watched him with sleepless eyes, and who pried into the secret motive of his lightest and most thoughtless action, it seemed clear that he did possess the dreaded knowledge. One fact only told against that supposition—if this was so, why did he not reveal himself? Why did he try to conceal his identity, and forego making those claims which it must be his purpose to make?

The only reasonable answer had been that he was not prepared with the necessary information on which to commence legal proceedings in respect of his rights, or that he awaited some more favourable opportunity of doing so.

It was while matters were in this state that Lady Edgecombe had suggested the policy of a match between Flora and Neville with a view to an amalgamation of interests, and on the principle of being prepared for any fate.

Sir Noel had shaken his head doubtfully. Perhaps he knew more than his lady, who certainly yielded to none of those doubts and fears, those besetting horrors and qualms of conscience which often so nearly upset his exterior equanimity. Acting upon her own suggestion, she had broached the question to Flora, little suspecting how nearly it jumped with her heart's wishes, or how it was opposed to that martylike policy to which she had doomed herself.

The death of Onslow had put an end to the project.

Singularly enough, however, a like idea had presented itself to the mind of Cheney Tofts. He was entering upon a project to which even his audacity was hardly equal, about the success of which he at times entertained grave doubts.

His plan was neither more nor less than to avail himself of the fact of Neville Onslow's orphan state—his education in obscurity abroad—the long intimacy between them—and the voluminous explanatory papers which had fallen into his hands—to pass himself off for young Balio Edgecombe, and to gain possession of his name and property.

This was clearly most hazardous.

By way of precaution, therefore, his cunning mind suggested that he should propose to Flora Edgecombe, whom he greatly admired, and if possible, work on her father's fears to gain his consent to an early marriage. In that case, whatever befall, he would have gained a footing in the family, and much as they might hate and detest him, it would be impossible for them to cast him off.

Ignorant of all this scheming and finessing, of which she was the proposed victim, Flora, as we have said, contemplated approaching Lady Edgecombe in this new difficulty, but shrank from doing so.

She preferred approaching Sir Noel at once, and entreating from him an explanation as to this secret influence which her new suitor gloried in possessing. That he would confide it to her she did not doubt. She knew of him only as a fond father and an upright man, not likely to have dangerous secrets which he would refuse to reveal to his petted child.

The only family secret of which she had any knowledge was that in connection with her brother Gabriel, and she could not see how that could compromise Sir Noel, or place him in the power of another.

Having resolved on this open, straightforward

course, Flora quitted the conservatory, and was proceeding in search of Sir Noel, when a slight scream arrested her attention, and she looked along the corridor to see whence it proceeded.

To her surprise she saw the gamekeeper, Gidley, advancing with long strides toward her, while Ruth—who had been temporarily promoted to the post of her maid—stood gasping against the wall, having, as it appeared, been cast off by Gidley's right arm as he came along.

" Beg pardon, my lady," he said, with a respectful bow. " This isn't my place, my lady—" Flora always received that title out of courtesy from the household—" but after what's goin' on, nothing ain't as it were."

" You have something to say to me?" Flora asked, alarmed at something in the man's manner.

He replied in the affirmative.

They were at that moment near one of the small breakfast parlours, and she motioned him to enter.

Before doing so, he looked round to satisfy himself that Ruth was not following them, and seeing that she still leaned against the wall, he put on a warning and severe look, and then followed his young mistress into the room.

" You'll 'scuse me, my lady," he then said, " but we won't shut the door. We'll just leave it ajar and speak low. When a door's shut, you can't tell whose o'ther side on it. When you can use your eyes, why, listeners beware."

Flora listened to this exordium with amazement.

" What you have to communicate is for my ear only?" she asked.

" Yes, my lady, and that young woman—"

" You speak of Ruth?"

" I do. About the artfullest and friskiest young creature in these parts, begging your pardon, and no mistake about it."

" Why," said Flora, forcing a smile, " I thought you were very good friends."

" We was sweethearts, in a manner o' speaking," replied the philosopher, drawing the back of his hand across his lips. " But no more. Never no more, my lady. However, 'twasn't along o' her I came to speak, though 'twere through her too, in a manner of speaking. But that's neither here nor there. To come to the point, my lady, I've come possessed of a little matter in the way of papers, and such like, as it seems to me ought to go into the hands of Sir Noel, or some one nigh to him, such as yourself, seeing that they're to do with matters in which this family is more or less concerned."

While speaking, he drew from his pocket a roll of paper, and opening the wrapper, displayed the very packet which Doriani had taken from the dying Claudia Guiver, and which Madame Doriani had failed to secure for Cheney Tofts.

" How did you come possessed of these documents?" inquired Flora.

" That, my lady, is what you must excuse my telling at this present," was the answer.

" But of what nature are they?"

" I haven't read 'em," said the honest keeper. " 'Tweren't my place; but the name of Edgecombe is mentioned in 'em here and there."

" Our name?"

" Yes."

" And as Mr. Cheney Tofts—or Mr. Balio Edgecome, as he calls himself now, and more shame for him—thought it worth his while to go through no end of dirty work to get at 'em, I've a fancy that they must be worth having, and maybe will do as much good in your hands as his—likely a goodish sight better."

" He, Mr. Tofts, sought to gain possession of these papers?" Flora asked, her hand trembling as she took them up.

" He did."

" And you prevented him?"

" By good luck—yes."

" But to whom did they belong?"

" Why, as far as I could make out, to a person who died at Nestleborough not long since, at the very time that Doctor Dorey Anne was found tied up in the Park, in a queer manner. You remember, my lady?"

" I do."

While she listened and answered, her eyes were eagerly scanning the papers before her, the contents of which caused her cheek to flush and pale by turns, while her lips quivered with the excess of emotion.

" These papers certainly affect our family affairs, Gidley," she presently said, " and we, I believe, have the most right to them. How and whence they were procured I won't ask, since you are disinclined to tell; but I thank you for your fidelity, I promise that it shall not compromise you, and I thank you."

She held out her soft, white, rosy-blushed hand, and the keeper took it in his broad, brown palm, in contrast to which it looked like a blossom against the bark of the tree on which it was grown."

" Do me one favour, Gidley," she said.

" A thousand, my lady."

" Do not mention these papers to anyone for the present, and promise me that if it is my wish you will replace them whence they came?"

Gidley scratched his head, and a perplexed look came into his face.

" That'll be difficult," he said, " but I'll try."

" Thank you."

With this he made a leg, and retreated from the apartment.

Flora hastily closed the door, and sitting down to the table, spread out the papers before her.

" Whatever they are," she reflected, " they refer to our family, and if they are of value to Cheney Tofts in this crisis of affairs, they surely cannot be matter of indifference to us. I will at least satisfy myself as to their purport."

It was not an easy task.

They were of various kinds and different import. As we know, they related to Sir Balio Edgecombe—his marriage—the birth of his son—the death of his wife—and his visit to England. The latter fact was conveyed in several letters addressed to his wife's mother, Claudia Guiver.

It was easy to see how valuable such a collection would be in the hands of the man Tofts, in support of the claims he had put forth.

Flora Edgecombe saw this, and her gratitudo was mingled with wonder at the good fortune which had placed them in her hands.

After an hour's reading, the papers were fairly mastered, and Flora was about to re-fold and place them in the order in which they had been arranged, when her attention was arrested by something which had hitherto escaped her.

On the back of the letters from Sir Balio Edgecombe a few lines had been written in pencil. The writing was that of Claudia Guiver.

As Flora perused these lines a sensation of horror, almost paralytic in its intensity, overcame her.

It was long before she could speak. When she did, her words escaped her lips in whispers.

" I dare not refuse him," she muttered, " hateful, distasteful, as he is to me. I must accept his advances for my father's sake!"

She pushed the papers from her as she spoke, shuddering as if there was some power of pollution in them.

(To be continued.)

LINA HERBERT.

LINA HERBERT was in the merriest mood, romping with her younger sisters and brothers, when her mother, wearing a serious and solemn expression, walked into the nursery, and desired an audience from her daughter.

The children, finding themselves about to be deprived of so valuable and congenial a companion, vociferously demanded Lina should be left to add to their hilarity.

" I will come back in a minute," said she, soothingly, supposing some grave domestic duty to be the cause of her temporary removal.

She found, much to her astonishment, that however pertaining to domestic affairs the tirade was to be, its nature was not calculated to leave her in a mood to continue her childish sports.

She followed in her mother's footsteps across the hall and into the library, and stood before her looking anxiously.

" I have a message from your father, Lina," commenced Mrs. Herbert.

Lina Herbert was a pretty girl at all times, but at this moment she looked charming.

There was lingering in her black eyes the charm of brightness which her youthful pastime had imparted to them.

Her cheeks were flushed, and their colour had heightened by the unexpected appearance of her mother.

Her mouth was partially opened, as if to catch some great piece of news, and yet her distended nostrils betokened some dread anxiety.

After readjusting her dress, Mrs. Herbert continued:

" Your father and I have been talking over a matter which seems pending between yourself and Harry Marlow. While we have known him for many years, we cannot consent to your ever becoming his wife. Your father is immovable on this subject, so you had better act upon this suggestion, and give Harry to understand his position to be that of an acquaintance or old friend, but nothing more. There are substantial reasons for this."

" Your substantial reasons are of course your own, but your strong objection, in fact your only objection, is poverty. I detest see why you or your father should make this the detriment, if I be willing to become a poor man's wife and abide the consequences. Harry

will not always be poor. He is a young professional man, industrious and ambitious, and capable of rising. And as I am nearly nineteen years of age, I really think myself capable of judging for myself."

This was spoken in a most decided tone. Mr. Herbert having been a listener, at this moment quickly walked up to Lina, and said:

" And if you are capable of judging for yourself, it shall not be under my roof. You owe a debt of gratitude and obedience to your parents, which they demand of you. What I say I mean—depend upon it." Then raising his hand to strengthen his resolution, he added: " I declare if you should ever marry Harry Marlow, I should discard you for ever. I would never tolerate either of you. The moment you become his wife I shall regard you as dead."

Lina dropped her eyes, and Mrs. Herbert almost winced under the threatening tone of her husband.

The silence which ensued was interrupted by a servant announcing that "a gentleman in the parlor wished to speak with Mr. Herbert."

Mother and daughter withdrew at the request of Mr. Herbert to show the gentleman into the library.

The host turned ashy pale as his guest entered.

" Good morning, Mr. Flintskin," said the trembling man.

" Good morning," was the cool reply, and he seated himself in the arm-chair which Mr. Herbert pushed towards him.

" Are you well?" inquired Mr. Herbert, blandly.

Not heeding the query, Mr. Flintskin continued:

" I have come to say that the account between us is to be settled without delay. The mortgage I hold on your house will be foreclosed in ten days, if you do not discharge the debt before that time. If George Herbert, you can raise money for the gambling-table, you can surely manage to pay your debts."

" What!—when?—how do you know I—you assert what you shall prove," stammered Mr. Herbert.

" And I can prove what I assert," was the curt reply.

Mr. Herbert was completely silenced. In the humble tone he begged for leave to make an explanation, but Mr. Flintskin desired but a direct recognition of the indebtedness, and cancelling of the same, which Mr. Herbert offered in the following form:

" You hold, at present, my note for £2,000, for which you have, as security, a mortgage on my house. I will add to this a mortgage on my furniture, provided you will give me an extension of six months, and will also allow you a liberal bonus for this favour, as I shall be able, at the expiration of that time, to meet these payments."

Mr. Flintskin accepted the proposition, a paper was drawn up to this effect, and an arrangement made to meet at a certain lawyer's on the following day to conclude the matter.

When the unwelcome visitor had been politely bowed out of the front door, Mr. Herbert returned to his writing-desk, and looked over his accounts. He summed them up, ran his fingers through his hair and soliloquized:

" Young Fitzgerald is worth £100,000. My liabilities are only about £10,000, for the loan of which I will offer him a mortgage on my house and furniture. Then I will settle with Flintskin, and transfer the mortgage to my son-in-law, who will never bother me further about it. Hem!"

Such a toss of the head and wave of the hand did Mr. Herbert indulge in, that the large inkstand, freshly filled, standing on his desk, coming in contact with his insignia of success, was knocked from its place, rolling over the splendid carpet, leaving a narrow running stream for nearly a yard in length.

Although the occurrence was calculated to cause some discomfort, Mr. Herbert found relief in the fact that it had been produced in so good a cause.

Mr. Herbert was not, by habit or profession, a gambler. An inordinate love of money and display had been the mainspring of his present pecuniary embarrassments.

Through business he had realized sufficient to keep up his establishment respectably. But this did not satisfy him. He had borrowed money, run largely in debt, and finally, among other means, had resorted to the gambling-table, hoping to retrieve his losses. But this had launched him more deeply into the abyss of insolvency, and his house and furniture were now in the hands of creditors.

As a final resort, he had resolved to marry his daughter to a wealthy young man, possessing no other charm for his own or the opposite sex than this pecuniary attraction.

Neither Mrs. Herbert nor her daughter knew of Mr. Herbert's position, nor that in rejecting Harry Marlow's suit he had, in his own mind, replaced it by another.

Lina Herbert was not a girl to be easily thwarted. There was as yet no real engagement existing between Harry Marlow and herself, but an understanding that when his business would sanction it they should contract an engagement.

To inform Harry that Mr. Herbert had refused his consent would therefore be rather premature. But much to her ease of mind, a circumstance occurred within a week from the day of her restrictions, threats, &c., from her father, which relieved her of anxiety on this one subject.

Harry Marlow was paying a visit to his fair friend Lina, when a slight sneer upon his upper lip preluded the declaration of what he had heard.

"You admire Mr. Fitzgerald, do you not, Lina?" he asked.

"Oh, not at all, Mr. Marlow."

"Then why have you thus exerted yourself to please him? He has boasted of the conquest he has made, and adds, 'She smiles so sweetly on a fellow!' You are right, Lina; he is rich, I am poor."

Lina drew herself up in indignation, and answered:

"His riches do not enrich, nor your poverty impoverish me."

Harry was charmed by her independence. He took her hand, looked earnestly into her eyes, and said:

"Lina, it may be selfish to ask you to engage yourself to me at present, but I fear to wait, lest some other may supplant me. Promise to love, to marry me, and I will labour hard to that end."

"My father will not consent—he swears it."

"And whom shall you marry?"

"He does not dictate on that subject."

"Will you promise—that's enough—and I will manage the rest?"

Silence gave consent.

She allowed the promise to be sealed upon her cherry red lips, and felt that although resolved to become Harry Marlow's wife, she had an ordeal to pass through less desirable than necessary.

Harry still held her hand when Mrs. Herbert opened the door, and walked towards the table near which this plighted couple sat.

Mr. Marlow offered her his chair, which she accepted, and which she did not relinquish until Mr. Marlow had left.

To avoid any interrogations, Lina sought her own room immediately after his departure.

The book which she grasped for relief of mind might as well have been written in hieroglyphics as in English, or contained Watts' Hymns or Mother Goose's Melodies, as far as her knowledge went, for her eyes saw only the menacing looks of her father, and her head was filled with plans for seeing and conversing with Harry without producing family jars and quarrels.

Harry Marlow knew the hour at which Lina took her usual morning walks.

He therefore, when time would permit, made his habits to correspond with her own, and many pleasant love chats they had together, until the relation of this occurrence was casually mentioned by her little sister, Mary, who was her constant companion in these rambles.

This, therefore, here ended, and Lina was more closely watched than ever.

But Harry was not at his wits' end, as we shall see.

In less than a fortnight after, he called at Mr. Herbert's house, fully prepared for any contingency.

When his name was announced, Mrs. Herbert was first to welcome him by her presence, nor did she leave when Lina joined them.

A few moments of trio conversation sufficed Harry, and a proposition to repair to the nursery, Lina's favourite portion of the house, was made by him.

Harry fondled and romped with the two-year old Gracie, until he had the opportunity to attach a small piece of paper to her apron.

Then lifting her in his arms, he set her upon Lina's lap, pointing to the billet.

Lina grasped it, but took no further notice of it until she found herself alone some time after.

Among the little declarations of love was a paragraph:

"Mr. Fitzgerald makes no secret of his intention. He declares not only to have been encouraged, but almost to have been proposed to, by your father, for you. I consider him a contemptible puppy, but be prudent in your reception of him. Do nothing to excite suspicions of our intentions for the future."

That same evening Mr. Fitzgerald called; that same evening Mr. Fitzgerald proposed and was rejected.

Mr. Herbert's indignation knew no bounds when his hoped-for son-in-law apprised him of this fact.

He summoned Lina to him.

"What does this mean? You refused Thomas Fitzgerald! If it be to marry Harry Marlow, you had better recall Fitzgerald, for never will you find the opportunity to engage yourself to, or run away with, Harry Marlow!"

Lina looked the picture of humility. Within her were other motives than submission. She wrote a

note to Harry, relating each occurrence of the last twenty-four hours, and mailed it to his office.

In the afternoon of the following day he called, and found Lina amusing the pet Gracie upon her lap. She was again used as the medium of correspondence: "If your father insists, dearest, upon your acceptance of F., do so provisionally—by naming the wedding-day six months hence."

Lina obeyed to the letter all Harry bid her do; and Mr. Herbert readily acceded to the compromise.

The weather was warm and sultry. Every family who could conveniently do so was preparing to leave the city, to pass the insufferable summer months at watering-places, or among the pleasanter shade of farm-houses.

Lina Herbert was finishing a piece of embroidery, when the voice of Thomas Fitzgerald suddenly announcing his appearance, caused her to drop her needle. He sat upon a low ottoman at her feet, and without any preliminary remark, took her hand and said:

"Dear Lina, so we're going to be married soon. You will have a fine house, fine horses, fine carriage, and a fine husband."

Lina looked at him to discover what particular motive he could have in thus asserting what he called "plain truths;" but defining no decided expression in his inexpensive countenance, she picked up her needle and continued her work.

Mr. Fitzgerald had a pale grey eye, which grew paler as he spoke. He had small, thin lips, and a remarkably slender and pointed nose, which corresponded wonderfully with his angular physique.

The contrast between himself and Harry was particularly striking at this moment to Lina, and as Mr. Fitzgerald lost in her estimation, so Mr. Marlow gained by the comparison.

Harry Marlow had been sitting at his desk in his office for several hours, drawing up important documents. He had finished them, folded them carefully, and laid them in a drawer, and cast his eyes at the clock hanging upon the side of the wall before him.

"Four o'clock: I have another hour to spare before going to dinner. I will occupy it with—" and a nod of the head concluded his intention.

Taking a small sheet of note-paper, he filled it, crossed and re-crossed it, doubled it to its smallest capacity, and placed it in his pocket-book.

He left his office, went to dinner, and immediately after was wending his way towards Mr. Herbert's house.

The nursery door was closed for the night when Harry Marlow arrived. The paper in the pocket-book was to be transferred to Lina; but as Mr. Fitzgerald's presence was added to that of the family's, the task proved to be doubly difficult, and trebly necessary, as the family expected to leave town in the course of a very few days.

Much ingenuity as Harry possessed, he could devise no means by which to execute his mission. He therefore bade good-night, after a short visit, and deep in contemplation, strolled out upon the street. The first person he encountered was a boy, carrying a bouquet in one hand, while in the other he held a note which he was reading. It suggested an idea to him.

"Will you sell me this bouquet?" inquired he of the lad, whose progress he impeded by stopping directly in front of him.

A bargain was struck and Harry Marlow became possessor.

He released the note from its lurking-place, secreted it in the bouquet, and returned to Mr. Herbert's making his apology for thus intruding so soon again.

He handed the bouquet to Lina, caught her eye, and glancing alternately at her and the bouquet, said:

"You had better re-arrange these flowers, when putting them in water. They will keep as they are, however, until you reach your room."

Lina fully comprehended his meaning, and lost no time in fulfilling his request.

The note was easily found. She read, re-read it, then tore it into a multitude of atoms, and consigned them to a lighted match's mercy.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert were about putting out the light in their bedchamber, when terrible shrieks reached their ears, as if coming from Lina's room.

Mrs. Herbert rushed to her assistance, and finding Lina lying upon the floor, looking very pale, screamed to her husband to run for a doctor as fast as possible.

Mr. Herbert lost no time in dressing himself, and reaching the street.

A gig stood near the house, and at the horse's head stood a gentleman in a full suit of black, adjusting something which seemed to have given way in the harness.

"Are you a physician, sir? If so, do come quickly. I believe my daughter's dying, or—I don't know what. She has been taken suddenly ill," said Mr. Herbert,

with great earnestness, without waiting for any response until his sentences had been concluded.

The demure-looking old gentleman, whose looks, hanging about his neck, were almost snow white, turned calmly around, and answered the questions put to him by asking another.

"Did you say your daughter is ill?"

Mr. Herbert was irritated by his nonchalant manner, and said:

"If you are a doctor, come to my house immediately."

"I suppose," replied the easy talking man, "I may fasten my horse first."

And as quietly as he had talked, did he proceed to tie his horse to the trunk of a tree near by, and as slowly did he follow Mr. Herbert, who, far ahead of him, opened the door of Lina's chamber and peeped in, then waited for the doctor, and waived him to enter.

Lina was lying on the bed, her mother bathing her temples and chafing her hands.

She partly opened her eyes as the gentleman approached her bedside.

The doctor took her hand, felt her pulse, and said:

"Where does your pain lie?"

"Here," said she, placing her hand upon her heart.

Then turning to the mother, he inquired:

"Has she had any sudden shock?"

Father and mother simultaneously answered:

"Not that I know of."

Lina shook her head as if in pain.

"She is exceedingly nervous, and had better lie perfectly still for a while. I will give her something to quiet her, and cause her to sleep."

He mixed a liquid in a small glass of water, held it to her lips, which she drank slowly and willingly.

He then drew a chair towards the bedside and sat him down, watching closely his patient.

There was a dead silence, when Mrs. Herbert whispered to her husband:

"As the doctor wants Lina to sleep, we had better leave for a short time."

Mr. Herbert nodded assent, and they tip-toed out of the room.

Twenty minutes had elapsed when Mrs. Herbert went to inquire after the state of her daughter's health.

She was lying awake, and answering questions put to her by the doctor.

He rose, took her hand, and said:

"Now, my dear child, you are better. Keep quiet, and I will call to-morrow morning again. The drops I have left you will take every three hours."

Then handing his card, upon which was written "Abraham Canning, M.D." he bowed and left.

Each morning he called, but gave very little satisfaction as to her entire recovery, although she was ordered to ride out every day, until at the close of the week he requested that he might be allowed to bring a consulting physician with him, to which the parents gladly assented.

On the same day, as quaint a looking individual as himself, but not quite so old, walked in with him. They consulted for over half an hour together, and receiving the thanks of the parents for the good news that their daughter was in no danger, but would be able to be about soon, as usual, requested that "Dr. Canning would call in occasionally."

Joyous, gay, sprightly, Lina Herbert was rushing almost wildly from her mother's bed-room to her own, then into the parlour, then into her father's library.

Mrs. Herbert never seemed more cheerful in her life. A mother's heart was leaping with joy, for Mr. Fitzgerald was to become a member of her family in less than twenty-four hours.

Mr. Herbert was light-hearted, for this son-in-law was to make him an independent man, relieve him of all outside debts, and, in fact, be a valuable acquisition for the present and the future.

Added to all these advantages, Lina had become reconciled to the match, thereby evincing a desire to please her parents in their every wish.

Mr. Fitzgerald called in the evening, attired in costly style, for he had declared he would dress each day in as fine a suit as a tailor could make.

Directly after he had made his obeisance to the family, the door-bell rung, and a large package, directed to Miss Herbert, was handed into the parlour. Lina opened it, and exhibited a set of diamonds of such magnificence as to make herself almost starlike.

She handed the case to her mother, who exclaimed "How superb!" Mr. Herbert looked over her shoulder, and compressed his lips, opened his eyes in admiration and dumb confusion.

It was then returned to Lina. She closed the box, and wrapping it again in paper, tendered it to Mr. Fitzgerald, saying:

"As Miss Herbert you will excuse my accepting your valuable gift; when I shall become—"

Her voice faltered; Mr. Fitzgerald interrupted her:

"My wife!"
Lina finished the sentence:

"I will accept it."

"Well, a day makes no difference. Please put it carefully away, Mrs. Herbert, till after the ceremony to-morrow."

Mrs. Herbert took it.

Lina pleaded a headache before the close of the evening, and begging permission to do so, retired from the company.

Her head found no resting-place that night. Confused dreams, visions, apparitions appeared before her. She saw the church decked in flowers, then crept huddled upon the arms of some few present.

There was a merry crowd entering, but solemn, melancholy faces were leaving the house in which she was to have been made a bride, but had left it, leaning on a stranger's arm. Then was heard distant sounds, marmurings, wailing, woe, and whining melancholy.

A storm was gathering without, clouds were dark and heavy, but ere she reached her home the sun shone brightly, and she felt warmed by its softening and genial rays.

She dreamed her sweet dream out, and waked with a smile, such as her face had seldom worn.

Every preparation had been made on the previous day for the wedding ceremony. Lina's travelling dress was plain, but in exquisite taste, showing a form as elegant as the mind and manners of the wearer.

At twelve o'clock precisely the carriages were at the door to convey the family to the church.

All were fully prepared to occupy them. The sanctuary of the Lord was opened to receive them. Lina, resting on the arm of her father, walked with un faltering step towards the altar.

There too was the mother and the intended husband.

The parson stood, his book before him. All was stillness when the parson slowly repeated:

"If there be any one present who can show just cause why this pair should not be united in the holy bonds of wedlock, he will please signify it by rising, or for ever hold his peace."

"I can!" cried a loud voice in the quiet house. All eyes were turned.

"A crazy man!" whispered the young women.

"Who's that?" questioned the man.

A loud whispering, buzzing noise was heard among the crowd.

Relief came to the inquirers.

The physician, Dr. Conning, walked with dignified gait down the aisle. At his approach Lina turned almost as pale as she had been on the occasion of his first visit to her house.

"And what is the cause you would show?" inquired the minister.

Raising his hand to his head, and lifting from it his hoary wig, displaying his own beautiful black curly hair, he said:

"I object to my wife becoming the wife of another!"

Then advancing toward Lina, he proffered his arm, which she hastily took.

"Hold!" cried Mr. Herbert; "we have no proof of this. I demand stronger proof than your word, sir."

A paper, which he had been holding in his hand, but which had not been observed, he instantly opened, laid upon the desk, and demanded that the Rev. Mr. Conning should step up. The consulting physician, as denuo as he ever was, was soon among the foremost of the crowd.

"I, too," said he, "was deceived. This gentleman, who represented to you the doctor, told me he was about marrying the young lady ere she should breathe her last. I accordingly did my duty as requested."

"It is not valid!" cried Mr. Herbert.

"Perfectly so, as with the consent of both parties it was solemnized," replied the minister behind the desk.

Lina Marlow, who had not yet spoken, followed close behind her parents, leaning on her husband's arm. But overjoyed, she must give vent to her feelings.

"Be reconciled, papa. I am not lost to every one in the world. Only to you I am already dead!"

J. L.

THE FIRST MESSAGE OF THE ATLANTIC CABLE. AN OMEN.—It is told that a reporter went for a large paper from London professionally to witness the departure of the Great Eastern on her enterprise, having left one of his children at home lying dangerously ill. His anxiety to get news from town day by day may be easily imagined. He was on board the Great Eastern after the splice with her had been formed, but before she had fairly started on the voyage, when a telegram addressed to him from London reached Valencia conveying the melancholy intelligence of his

poor child's decease. Seeing the purport of the message, and being a man of kind feeling, the Transatlantic Telegraph Company's agent on shore immediately forwarded the painful tidings through the new cable to our acquaintance on board the great ship, which he duly received. That the first official use thus made of the cable should have been to communicate the news of a death was not a very favourable omen; and in superstitious times such a circumstance would have been taken as portending serious disaster to the undertaking; indeed, reading it by the light of the untoward result, some weak folks even now-a-days might be disposed to attach a supernatural significance to it.

DREAMS OF CHILDHOOD

I AM dreaming, ever dreaming,
Of my childhood's happy home—
Of the orchard and the meadow
Where my infant-ssteps did roam.

Of the little snow-white cottage,
Clustered o'er with wild woodbine—
Intertwined with trailing roses,
Clematis and eglantine.

Of the noisy, bubbling brooklet,
Where, with little shoeless feet,
I have wandered many a morning,
List'ning to its murmurs sweet.

Of my dear, beloved mother,
As she sat in her arm-chair,
Close beside the low west window,
Sunbeams playing in her hair.

Of my father, homeward coming,
Of his happy, smiling face—
As he stopped beneath the window,
Wife and children to embrace.

Happy! happy days of childhood,
Never can they come again;
But the memory of their pleasures,
Soothes full many an hour of pain.

A. W. B.

THE HEIRESS.

CHAPTER XX. A PLAN FOR HAROLD, AND HOW IT ENDED.

A youth to whom was given
So much of earth, so much of heaven.

Wordsworth.

This smouldering fire had flashed into a blaze—the first love of a boy was born full-grown.

"She has asked me to be her friend," he said. "She trusts me. She has promised to call on me in time of trouble or danger. My life shall be hers. My strength, my energies, shall be spent in her service, and at last I will win her. Yes, she shall be mine; for whoever or whatever she is, I would trust that angel face—that siren voice—despite a million traducers."

Yet Alfred Fairfield perhaps would not believe without proof. He might utter doubts, insulting to her and offensive to him; or, believing, might win her heart, and leave him to despair.

"Friends! Ah, yes, we are more than friends," he whispered. "Alfred Fairfield is the brother of my soul. But I must keep her secret, and I must win her if I can."

Yes, it was a solemn promise. He dared not betray her, and even that was part of his compact with Alfred. Had they vowed to be her knights and champions?

Thus he sat pondering, when Mr. Shelbourne and the doctor returned. The first words of the former were:

"Where is Harold?"
Richard shrugged his shoulders.

"I cannot inform you, not having seen him since your departure," he said.

Mr. Shelbourne's face flushed.
"Has my son so little of the gentleman about him as to leave a guest alone all day?" he said. "I bade him do his duty as a host before I left. I blush for the boy."

"No matter, no matter," said the good-natured doctor. "Dick did very well, no doubt; don't expect too much of your lad."

Mr. Shelbourne paced the room.

"Doctor," he said, "this farce is too absurd. That boy and I cannot live together. There is aversion in his every glance. And I feel as a father should never feel to his son. I try to think of him as the child my wife left to my care; but I cannot. Her nature was noble—she came of a proud and brave race. She would have blushed for him as I do. I am resolved at last. I shall take measures to place Harold under

the care of some gentleman of learning and piety, and arrange my affairs—so that in the event of my decease, he will find himself and his estates properly cared for—and leave this place for ever; forgetting that I have son, or that the home of my forefathers still lifts its head above the earth."

With those words, and a glance of mingled bitterness and sorrow, he strode from the apartment, and did not reappear for several hours.

Mr. Shelbourne was a man who wasted few words on anything.

Having once spoken of his determination to place Harold under the care of some learned man, or at some foreign college, he never mentioned it again, until, one bright morning, when seated in his library with the doctor and Richard, he suddenly rang the bell, and requested the servant to summon Master Harold immediately.

The boy came at once, wearing that air of perplexity and terror which always seemed to fall upon him in his father's presence, and seating himself at the other side of the table, hung his head and awaited the communication which Mr. Shelbourne seemed about to make on some important subject.

Never before had the boy's timid mien so angered that stern man. It required a mighty effort on his part to restrain some outburst of indignation. For a few moments he bit his lips and clenched his teeth; but at last forced himself to speak with a dignified degree of calmness.

"Harold, you and I have known very little of each other. It is partly my own fault. I should not have abandoned you to strangers for so many years. But since my return I have been greatly grieved, and much offended by your conduct. Your whole deportment has been such as to make me blushing for you. You exhibit neither respect nor affection for me. You have neglected every manly accomplishment I have endeavoured to instruct or have you instructed in. Without disguise, it is evident we are mutually disagreeable to each other; therefore, it is, in my opinion, best that we henceforth live apart. It grieves me to say so. Does it grieve you to hear it, my son?"

"No." Nothing more—that short, coldly-uttered monosyllable, "No."

"You agree to what I have said?"

"Yes, sir."

"We are best apart."

"Yes, sir."

"Then let me inform you that my friend, the Rev. Alwyn North, has agreed to take you under his care, and that I shall leave the country at once. You will have a liberal allowance, and every advantage of instruction, by which I hope you will profit."

"Thank you, sir."

"We shall probably never meet again."

"No, sir."

"You will be ready to-morrow at noon. Mrs. North, who is at present on a visit a few miles from this place, will kindly stop that you may travel with her. As you appear to entertain some affection for your old nurse, you may pass the intervening time with her. I shall pension her, and she will reside elsewhere, so that probably you will very seldom see her, if indeed ever."

"Grace—do you mean Grace?" cried Harold.

"Of course."

"I cannot part from poor old nurse," said the boy. "Oh, you are very cruel."

And bending down his head he wept.

"You have rendered this alteration necessary," said Mr. Shelbourne.

"I? Oh, it will kill her. It will kill her. I will obey—I will do anything, but don't take her from me."

"Enough of this," said Mr. Shelbourne; "you may go."

He opened the door, and Harold passed through it sobbing.

Ten minutes after old Grace burst into the room, and fell at Mr. Shelbourne's feet.

"Don't take my dearie from me," she sobbed. "I'm very old—I can't live long. Oh, please leave my dear with me, or I shall die."

Mr. Shelbourne looked upon the tear-stained and wrinkled face with some emotion.

"I am glad my wretched son has inspired feelings of affection in any one's heart," he said. "I am equally glad that he appears to return that sentiment in at least one instance. Yet, my good woman, this must be done, and I greatly fear that your influence over him has been far from beneficial. You have made no effort to cure him of his absurd timidity—you encourage him in his odd habits. To use a common expression, you have spoiled him, and for his own good you must part. Perhaps counteracting influence may make him other than he is. Though I greatly fear it is too late to hope."

Sorrow was never written more deeply on any brow than that on that of Mr. Shelbourne's as he uttered these words.

Richard's heart throbbed with compassion.

"Would that I were his son," he said, "that I might prove to him how strong filial affection may be! He deserves affection. He is worthy of respect!"

So strong were his emotions that he advanced closely to the side of the sad, stern man, and took his hand.

The mute token of sympathy met with no repulse. Proud as he was to others, Mr. Shelbourne was always gentle as the humblest man to Richard. He looked up at him with a weary smile, and repeated what he had often before said and thought.

"You are a happy man, Rawdon."

Day drew to a close, sombre shadows replaced the glorious halo of sunset, and amidst them the crescent moon arose.

A peaceful silence rested upon The Pines, and the whole village seemed to repose.

Now and then the far-off notes of some simple musical instrument floated upon the air, or the whistle of a ploughman returning homeward pierced the silence with its sharp, shrill notes, but nothing louder fell upon the ear.

On the verandah sat the gentleman of the house and his guests.

The doctor was lazily recounting some old college joke, and the others listening, as all three puffed away at the most fragrant of cigars.

Richard's mind was, in truth, wandering, not only from the present scene, but from the merry tale. He was thinking of the lovely lady, and of her yet unfulfilled promise of a second meeting, and dreaming, as boys dream, of their first love.

Now that Mr. Shelbourne had resolved to leave England, perhaps for ever, he found no difficulty in prevailing on Dr. Rawdon and Richard to remain at The Pines until his departure.

Harold was to be sent away on the morrow, and soon the old place would be deserted or sold to strangers, so, at least, all three believed that night.

The first token of the breaking up came to them unexpectedly in the form of old Grace, who stood with a small bundle in her hand, and an antiquated black bonnet crowning her cap-border, so suddenly before them, that she might have risen from the ground.

"I have come to bid you good-by, sir," she said. "I might as well get it over. I shall take the evening train for London, where I have friends. It's hard leaving a place I've been in so long, but since it must be it must be."

"My good woman," said Mr. Shelbourne, "this haste is unnecessary—entirely unnecessary. I do not intend to turn you penniless upon the world; I shall provide for you liberally. Remain until the last. I should grieve to think of anything else. It is your right, for you have been faithful to me and affectionate to my boy."

Old Grace shuddered.

"I've done little but harm to you or yours," she said. "I know it and repent it, and I can't stay. I'll let you know where I am when I fetch my things, sir; but I must be quick now or I'll lose the train. God bless you, sir, and try and forgive me as you need forgiveness yourself. Good-by, sir; good-by, gentlemen."

And in a determined way, which made interference quite impossible, she trudged away in the moonlight, leaving the group to discuss her singular conduct.

"As well so, perhaps," said Mr. Shelbourne. "We shall avoid a scene when Harold goes. Poor old woman, I have made her wretched. It is part of my fate. I think God must look angrily upon me, Rawdon. He has afflicted me surely."

At this moment the sound of carriage wheels was heard, and to the surprise of all, a vehicle drove to the gate and stopped, and the driver descending, handed out a lady.

"It is the hotel carriage," said Dr. Rawdon; "and that is Dick Duncan, or I'm no guesser; but who can the lady be?"

"The lady, if I am not mistaken, is Mrs. North," said Mr. Shelbourne, and arising, advanced to meet her.

"Mrs. North, I believe?"

"Yes, Mr. Shelbourne. You scarcely expected me at such an hour."

"Nevertheless, I am happy to receive you."

"I have been suddenly called home by the illness of my father," said Mrs. North, "and must travel with all haste; but, having promised to call for your son, and understanding that his extreme timidity and nervousness render it undesirable that he should travel alone, I have stopped at this unseasonable hour. The young gentleman can perhaps accompany me, and his trunks can be forwarded to-morrow, or at any appointed time."

"You are very kind, Mrs. North," said Mr. Shelbourne. "My son can be ready immediately. You

will find him sadly in need of a mother's care and counsel; sadly deficient in every mental and physical quality. But I trust you will make every allowance for him; and though I cannot expect you to feel that interest in him which brilliant qualities would awaken, I know you will be gentle with him. Thus far, his only affectionate impulses have been toward an old woman, his nurse from infancy. Perhaps another woman, and one in every way so admirable as Mrs. North, may have more influence over him than I. I have done wrong, perhaps; I have not, it may be, understood him. I confide to you the task I am incapable of filling."

"I will be a mother to the poor boy," said the lady. "I assure you I already pity him; and, my dear sir, trust in God—He may send light upon the poor lad's mind, and make him all you wish."

Mr. Shelbourne bowed, and rose to ring the bell.

"You will take some refreshment, Mrs. North?" he said.

"No, sir; I have just dined, thank you."

"A glass of wine, then. Samuel, the sherry; and request Master Harold to prepare instantly to accompany Mrs. North."

The servant left the room.

Ten minutes after he returned with the wine and glasses on a silver salver. Ten minutes more elapsed, still no sign of Harold.

Mrs. North grew anxious.

"I grieve to hurry Master Harold," she said, "but the time is passing, and I must leave by the evening train."

Again Mr. Shelbourne rang the bell. This time old Deborah replied.

"Tell Master Harold that his father desires his presence instantly," said he.

"Master Harold knows that," she said.

"Why does he not come, then?"

"Says he won't."

"Won't?"

"Yes, he won't go to-night."

"Does he know Mrs. North is kind enough to trouble and incommode herself on his account?"

"Yes, sir."

"This is unbearable!" said Mr. Shelbourne. "Order him instantly—"

Here Mrs. North interposed.

"As the young gentleman is to be placed under my care, I presume it will not be improper for me to attempt to influence him in this matter," she said. "Young persons of feeble mind are amenable to kindness, and I have some experience. Where is Master Harold?"

"In the drawing-room, mum, lying on a sofa, sulking," said Deborah.

"Show me the way. I'd rather go alone, Mr. Shelbourne."

And Mrs. North followed Deborah.

"So you think his temper is at fault?"

"Know it," said Deborah.

And she opened the door of the drawing-room.

Mrs. North took the lamp and entered.

For a few moments Deborah heard a murmur of voices, then shrill exclamations of horror, and Mrs. North swept out with a face flushed scarlet, and eyes sparkling with indignation.

"Show me the way from this den of iniquity," she said. "I am disgraced to have entered it. That creature—that sinful creature! Gracious goodness! what is the world coming to?"

"What is the matter?" asked Deborah.

"Have they deceived you? I shouldn't wonder, poor old soul! But they thought to cheat me. They may have known me better. There, show me the way. Why did I ever cross the threshold?"

She brushed past Deborah even as she spoke the words, and made her way toward the door opening on the porch, and would have glided past the three gentlemen but that Mr. Shelbourne stopped her.

"Mrs. North, what has happened?"

"I have discovered your deception, sir!" And she turned an angry face towards him. "Let me go! This roof smothers me! Oh, shame, shame, sir, shame!"

"Mrs. North, I pray you to explain yourself. Has anything been done to offend you?"

"To offend me? Oh, Mr. Shelbourne, you ask me that—you, who have endeavoured to introduce an abandoned creature into the home of innocence and decency—the home where my pure daughters dwell, and where I, an honest matron, have lived uprightly so many years—the home where a servant of God is master! Shame, sir, shame!"

"My miserable son!" groaned Mr. Shelbourne. "In pity, tell me—what has the wretched boy done or said? Has he insulted you? Has he?"

Mrs. North turned upon him with flashing eyes.

"Your son!" she repeated, with a bitter sneer. "That farce has ended. Its motive is incomprehensible to me. It was as shallow as sinful. Your son!"

Give the creature some other name. Your son! I could laugh but for anger. Your son! Hypocrite! and she swept from the porch, and entering the carriage cried to the driver, "As fast as you can to the station," and was gone.

"What does this mean?" cried Mr. Shelbourne, as the astonished gentlemen stared at each other. "Has Harold exhibited some trait of which I never suspected him, or is Mrs. North mad?"

The doctor shook his head.

"Incomprehensible! Incomprehensible!" he said. "I'd see the lad and find out. I say, Dick, what's the matter?"

Dick was staring with wide open eyes at a patch of moonlight which illuminated a spot of the garden, just beyond the deep shadow of a laburnum.

"Nothing," said Dick; "it was fancy, I suppose."

"What was fancy?" asked the doctor.

But Richard would not satisfy him.

The truth was that a moment before he had seen a female figure, hooded and shawled, standing in the patch of light, waving a white kerchief with a gesture that seemed to say, "Farewell."

The outline of the form was not to be mistaken. It was the mysterious lady of The Pines.

Something whispered to him that she had left that place for ever—that then and there they parted.

For a brief moment he sat quite still, overwhelmed by the thought; the next dashed into the garden.

But neither among the tangled bushes, nor wandering where the roses bedewed the air with fragrance, nor down by the blue water-side, could he find sign or token of the mysterious maiden, or of any other living soul.

CHAPTER XXI.

A LOST HEIR AS WELL AS A LOST HEIRESS.

O now, for ever

Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content;

Shakespeare.

Here comes the lady! oh, so light a foot!

Will no' wear out the everlasting dust. *Bid.*

By the time he had returned from his fruitless search the whole house was in commotion. Lights danced in every room, and every one beneath the roof was searching for Master Harold, who was nowhere to be found.

He had positively been in the drawing-room when Mrs. North entered. Sam, the footman, declared that he had seen him leave the apartment and enter his own room, but that was the last known of him.

At first it had been supposed that, having offended Mrs. North, he feared his father's anger, and had secreted himself; but now grave fears were entertained for his safety.

The servants were full of horrible fancies.

"He's been murdered for his gold watch," said Sam.

"He's drowned, poor lamb. They ought to have watched him better," said cook.

"He's hanged himself," blubbered the housemaid.

"I knew he'd be driven to it."

"We shall find him covered with blood somewhere," said Sam. "What do you think, coachman?"

"It's my belief he's cut and run," said Barney.

The last sunrise, as the most original, was communicated to Mr. Shelbourne. He summoned the coachman to his side at once.

"So you think Master Harold has run away?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"And why?"

"Well," said Barney, scratching his head, "it's hard to account for the ways of those innocents. You see he wanted liberty; those do who can't have it invariably. I'd be looking at the station, they know him most likely; anyway, you can describe him. He's not in the house, that's certain."

"He may be right," said Mr. Shelbourne. "Barney, saddle a horse; and I know you will go with me, Dick. Another for this young gentleman. Doctor, I know you will remain here and do what you can if that unhappy son of mine returns. Of all things keep him from leaving the house if you find him secreted about it. I am tender on the subject of an open exposure of his imbecility and want of filial affection."

"Yes, yes," said the doctor. "But I think Barney is right—Harold has run away, poor fellow. He was afraid of the reverend gentleman."

Mr. Shelbourne paced to and fro in great agitation, and Richard watched him with sympathetic glances.

Soon the horses came to the gate, and the two mounted, and galloped off toward the station, which they reached in half an hour.

There they found the office quite empty of passengers, and a tall gentleman reading the newspaper, with his hat on, and an air of being at ease, while a porter smoked a short pipe beside the door.

To him Mr. Shelbourne addressed himself.

"Is the evening train for London in yet?"

"Half an hour ago, sir," said the porter.

"Had it many passengers to take up here?"

"No, sir—only three. Wait a bit, four—three women folks and one man."

"Can you describe the man?"

"No, sir. Lost anything?"

"No. I am anxious about some one."

"Please Mr. Brush can tell you. Walk in, sir."

Into the office Mr. Shelbourne walked at once, followed by Richard. At his entrance the official arose and bowed.

"Good evening, squire. Hope you didn't mean to go up in the train. You're too late if you did."

"No, sir, I did not. But I have important reasons for desiring to know who were taken up here."

"Have, hey? Well, squire, I'll tell you. Just four. Three on 'em waited here a spell, and one come in a hurry at the very nick o' time. First place, that old nurse from your house, Mrs.—what's her name?"

"Yes," said Mr. Shelbourne. "Go on."

"Next a tall lady in black, came in the hotel carriage—blue eyes, fair hair, and a kind of better-than-you-be-air."

"Mrs. North. Well, sir?"

"Then a little hunch-backed gentleman—walks with a cane. Good little soul—Pratt's uncle. Leave him something when he dies."

"Yes, sir. Well, the fourth?"

"The prettiest girl I ever saw."

"A girl! And there was no one else?"

"No—not a soul. But I vow, I never saw such a beauty. Dressed somehow odd, too; and in an awful poker."

"What did she look like?" asked Richard, in a low voice.

"Nothing I ever saw," said the man. "Dark as a gipsy, with such eyes, and a rich silk dress, under a common hood and shawl. You never saw such a beauty, sir."

"We are wasting time, Dick," said Mr. Shelbourne. "I am obliged to you, sir. Come, my boy, Harold was not in the train."

"One moment," pleaded Dick. "Pray, had the lady any baggage with her?"

"A small bundle," said the man.

"How did she come?"

"On foot, by herself."

"And she had dark eyes and hair?"

"Like ink."

"And a pretty figure?"

"Angelic. I say sir, you seem to know her."

"Come, Dick, come!" cried Mr. Shelbourne, already in the saddle.

"Yes, sir," answered Dick. "Only an instant more. I do know her, I believe. Tell me about her."

"She was frightened, and had been crying. Her dress was fine, and her outside things like a servant's. And another queer thing—when she was stepping into the carriage, something caught her shawl and pulled it off. I picked it up, but not before I had seen that the dress she wore was not that which ladies wear to travel in. It was made low in the neck and short in the sleeves, like a ball dress, and would have stood alone, it was so rich. She had the plumpest neck and arms, and on one of 'em just above the elbow, a mark as big as a shilling, rose-red, and the shape of a star."

"It is she—I do know her," cried Richard, in a great state of excitement. "I would give the world to follow her."

"Have to wait until morning," said the man.

"Richard!" called Mr. Shelbourne, and the bewilfered boy obeyed.

He was right. She it was who had waved her kerchief to him in the garden. The mysterious lady had left The Pines; and where was Harold? Had they gone together? Was her fate actually twined with his? Was Alfred right? No, no, no, anything but that. And yet, how probable it seemed.

The only explanation of her presence—the only explanation of her departure, was that her life was in some way linked with that of Harold Shelbourne.

(To be continued.)

THERE has been little heard of late of the character of the vintage in Germany and France, but we now learn from both countries that it will be exceptionally fine. On the 20th of August the vintage had already commenced in the most favoured districts of the Rhine, and the only fear is that the vineyard proprietors will be tempted to hurry on account of the ripeness of the grapes, as the Germans fancy that it is the month that makes the grape fit for wine, and not the early sun. New wine of the present year was drunk at Aubonne, in Switzerland, on August 27th.

Such an occurrence had not been known since 1822. From the Rhine the same favourable accounts of the vintage are heard. It will be both good and abundant, despite the storm that damaged the fair land of champagne, and deprived the world of a third of the bottles that should have been drunk; and here, also, in all directions plenty and quality are spoken of.

THE Emperor of the French is inclined to do Church-like service, if not to the Church's head. The King of Sweden's son and the son of the King of Portugal are to have the honour of his being their godfathers. In the latter case the Pope will scarcely be pleased with the change from the King of Italy, as he regards that monarch as a strayed lamb, while the Emperor of the French is according to his own words of comparison a wolf—"Quel altro è il lupo."

A WINTER IN ITALY.

BY H. B. S.

THE OLD SEA CITY.

IT is the trouble of tourists that a sense of everyday life follows them everywhere. Romance flies before them like a shadow. When once you have boiled your tea-kettle, and eaten the bread-and-butter of daily existence in a place, all the fancies leave it, and it becomes as homely and prosaic as your common life anywhere else.

But Venice is rather an exception. The charm lasts longer. The mode of life there is so singular, so dreamy and poetic in its very nature—something so "ancient and fish-like" in its most ordinary details—that you are constantly charmed and surprised.

To pick seaweed off your doorsteps, and stop from your door into a black gondola—to glide silently through watery streets, among quaint, old-times palaces, and watch the dark, queer-looking craft of all shapes and sizes, which go rippling past you with their uplifted steel prows like the tail of some sea-monster—to see them bend, and veer, and turn, now to become entangled in groups, and then quietly, and without noise, sliding out again—is something that steals over one with a dreamy calm.

A gondola is the very poetry of luxurious life and motion. Sailing is something more lulling and dream-like even than flying, because that flight supposes a volition and exertion on your own part, whereas sailing is a resigning of yourself in perfect rest to be borne along by another power. One always conceives the Isles of the Blessed as most fittingly gained, not by the flight of wings, but by being borne along in some floating barque, thin and airy as a roseleaf, and undulating with every pulse of summer waves.

So when one gives one's self up to one's *valede place*, or courier, to see Venice, it is with a delicious nonchalance quite unlike the bustling activity of seeing other cities.

The hour comes, and you are summoned to the back door of your hotel, where your black-hooded gondola lies quietly waiting for you. You throw yourself back on a low, deep-cushioned seat, and lie in a lazy reverie, while the picture before your eyes is ever changing, and no sound but the slightest swish and ripple of the boat tells you that you are moving.

Here we go, down this glassy street. See the seaweed swaying and falling on the foundations of the houses as our motion undulates the water. The sunlight scarcely falls between the tall houses, yet the molten looking-glass below catches every reflection, and sends a luminous atmosphere upward on to the grim, time-worn walls.

Now you are going to turn the corner, and your gondolier gives out a signal to warn any one on the other side that you are there. You slide round again, and now you find yourself right in face of the Bridge of Sighs, and between the sculptured walls of the old ducal palace and the prison—it's ill-omened neighbour.

You pass under the bridge, and the grand canal unfolds before you with its wide sheet of water, bristling with the masts of ships of all countries, and animated by the gliding motion of every species of water craft which the wants of a large population can demand.

You see floating omnibuses plying up and down with their gay, fluttering awnings; solemn aquatic family coaches with their family gondoliers; floating greengrocers' carts full of cabbages, squashes, and onions.

Here passes the smart gondola of an Austrian naval officer, rowed by two sailors in uniform; and there again goes the post-office barge up to the steps of yonder old palace, now used for the city mafia. A party of pleasure passes you on a large barge, made in some respects like a gondola, but bearing instead of the solemn black hood a gay awning of red and white stripes. Now a fat old Englishman rides by, sitting plump back in his solitary black gondola, and

reading the newspaper—the *Galigiani* probably. Here comes a pensive young man, who leans back on his cushions, with a book in his hand—probably a poem.

Here are a couple—gentleman and lady—in a tête-à-tête, of which no word can be overheard by living mortal, unless their gondolier understands them; there goes mamma, nurse, and three children, the latter bobbing their round, apple-ripe faces through the black, low window.

Here a bright blue-eyed boy stands full of life and pride on a gondola, while a servant in livery is showing him how to handle the oar, and papa in the next barque is looking on as papas do when their Charley first takes a manly step upward in life.

On either side are the faded palaces of other days, whose fronts once glowed with gorgeous paintings, and were rich with jasper, porphyry, malachite, and lapis-lazuli, now soiled and dimmed; their frescoes faded, they impress one as does the tarnished gold lace and torn and faded satin and embroidery of old festal garments. Scarcely one of these palaces is now held by a Venetian family, and too many of them are mere barracks for Austrian soldiers, who lounge out of their windows and stand sentinel at their doors.

Your gondolier tells you that here lived such a family, and they used to keep twenty gondolas and forty gondoliers; now they are all gone.

Venice is, in fact, in a gradual course of depopulation of Venetian families. Ever since its occupation by the Austrians, there has been a continual process by which the older inhabitants have been disposing of their property there and moving into more fortunate portions of the country, particularly into Piedmont.

Since the late war this process is becoming still more rapid. The gondolier said to our cousin, "Every family that can do it wants to leave Venice now, so as not to have their young men pressed into the army."

Austria always had a pleasant little habit of making people pay for their own fetters. She recruits her army with her conquered subjects, so that parents may have the satisfaction of being kept in bonds by their own children, and taxes every branch of industry to pay for the fortifications and garrisons that are necessary to support her oppressions.

How agreeable it would be to some English father and mother, when they had nursed a son through tooth-aching, measles, and whooping cough—got him through reading, writing, and arithmetic—in fact, brought him just to that period when they want him to lean on as a stay, to have him drafted off as a common soldier in an army which is kept in their country for nothing but to oppress them.

But let respectable Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones look upon Samuel or James, and imagine him taken and used just for gun wadding, or to be shot down in the next ditch and buried like a dog, only because some foreign army wants their country, and they will sympathise with Venetian families for wanting to get out of Venice.

Poor Venice! It spoils all the romance—it spoils even the glorious radiance of her artistic galleries—it casts a shadow over the splendours of her Titian and Paul Veronese to think how she has fallen!

But we were talking of the grand canal, and we have a little more to say of it. This grand canal is the sort of great central artery of the Venetian system. Venice is built on seventy-two islands or shoals, where the places for building houses have been formed by sinking piles and stone, and this grand canal makes a circuit through it, in form like a letter S. A hundred and forty-six canals open into it.

The most considerable part of Venice lies on one side, and many of her finest churches, public buildings, and galleries on the other.

The ducal bridge that crosses the grand canal is the Rialto, famous in Shakespeare's days as a sort of merchant's exchange, and still occupied by many jewellers' shops. Our gondola passed under this, and stretched away far up towards the railroad depot, where the wide lagoon or flat is spanned by a railroad bridge, whose many graceful arches seem to rise in the midst of a silver mirror of sea.

The view of the horizon is here bounded by the snow-capped forms of the Tyrolean Alps, and in a lovely morning or evening, floating and swinging in one's gondola here, one might fancy one's self going to fairy-land.

The grand canal at the other end takes one up to the only public promenade where horses are allowed in Venice. This spot is laid out with an agreeable variety of winding walks, well planted with trees, and the Venetians are said to be indebted to the French for laying it out.

Thus far some general view of Venice, such as strikes one when one first goes out in one's gondola for a bird's eye view.

We spent a week there, and where we went and what we saw we will briefly narrate.

(To be continued.)



[THE YOUNG ARTIST.]

ALFRED THE GIPSY.

CHAPTER I.

"THERE, then, lies Rome!"

The setting sun was pouring his golden beams through rifts in a gorgeous cloud that hung low in the west, flinging them in many a level arrow of crimson light far across the Campana, that, like a lap, holds the eternal city, and lighting up the summits of the hundred towers of the "mistress of the world," as if a spire of flame blazed on each lofty pinnacle.

"There, then, lies Rome!" repeated the speaker, who having at length reached the top of the ridge that shut in the Campana from the rest of the world, and which command a wide prospect of the magnificent plain outstretched beneath, stood leaning on his staff, gazing with enchanted vision on the scene which, at all times beautiful, now under the reflection of the sunset glory of an Italian sky, was invested with surpassing loveliness.

He was a mere youth, scarcely having entered his nineteenth year; his skin brown as a berry, but glowing with the rich blood of health. His hair was of a dark chestnut colour, and piled on his forehead, fell down on either side about his shoulders, in shining waves. His features were very fine, of an intellectual and manly cast, and seemed eloquent with the inspiration of genius.

He was a traveller; as his soiled dress, the staff in his hand, and the little bundle strapped to his shoulders, indicated.

He was of humble degree, also, for he not only travelled on foot, which, of itself, might not always prove lowliness of condition, but his garments were coarse, though very neat.

He was dressed in a closely fitting jacket of green stuff, with white trousers, and a dust-worn, black velvet cap, covered his head; while, in his hand, he carried a leather wallet, apparently containing provisions.

To the bundle at his back was swung a painter's palette, and from one of the pockets of his jacket protruded the ends of a bundle of painter's brushes; while the staff on which he leaned bore some resemblance to the "rest," with which artists support the wrist when at work. It was apparent that he was a young painter going to Rome to study.

"Yonder, then, is the mother of nations, with her throne upon the seven hills—the mistress of the world—the eternal city! Wonderful spot! The theatre of events how great! How vast the thoughts—how full of awe the emotions that fill my mind! Most mighty

city! Subject of all past history—theme of terrible prophecy! It is overpowering to the senses to contemplate thee—for at one thought the acts and mighty deeds of half the world's age rush upon my soul, overwhelming, crushing, prostrating its powers with their suffocating weight!"

The fine countenance of the youth glowed as he thus apostrophised a spot upon which no civilized human eye can for the first time look without the deepest emotion. Every eloquent feature bore testimony to the existence of the feeling in his own bosom, to which his lips had given utterance.

"Alas, how art thou fallen!" he continued, after a few moments' silence; "thy glory is taken from thee, and thou art become a mighty wreck of the past—thy honours, thy glories, thy noblest associations are gone! Thy brightness has, indeed, become dim, and thy gold brass. Once teacher of art and arms to the world—the school of warriors and of statesmen, what art thou now? The sword of steel is converted into the pencil—thy armies into troops of singers—and thy statesmen into gown'd priests! Nay, but imperishable art remains with thee; and while thou dost continue to contain all that is beautiful or great in painting or sculpture—while every ruin upon thy green bosom, Italy, is a Pharoah to light genius to the altars where it loves to worship—while thy palaces are temples of art, and thy decaying cities schools for painters and sculptors, thou art still living, still great, still Rome! Physical Rome may exist no longer, her political empire may be ended, but the imperishable spirit of thy greatness lingers about thee, holding over the hearts and minds of men an intellectual sway that shall even eclipse thine ancient glory!"

He paused and gazed thoughtfully upon the fair city, following, mentally, the current of thought he had given language to, when an English travelling-chariot, with a coronet and ducal arms emblazoned on the panels, and attended by the usual retinue in plain liveries, gained the top of the hill; and the exclamation, "Rome, Rome!" in a voice of thrilling sweetness, to which surprise and emotion gave depth and richness, caught his ear.

He turned his head in time only to see the carriage roll swiftly past him, though not without having caught sight of the fine contour of woman's bonnetless head and shoulders, and the profile of a noble-looking gentleman beside her, both having their gaze directed eagerly toward the capitol.

In a few seconds, the carriage was hid by a winding in the descent, but shortly afterward reappeared rolling over the Campana towards the gate of Rome. He followed it with his eye till only a faint cloud of

dust indicated its position, and then saddening spoke, giving a key to the meditations that evidently had more recently occupied his mind.

"How rich that voice! It was but a single word it articulated—but that word was full of sweet music! Its melody will vibrate through my soul in undying cadence. She must be beautiful; such a voice could belong to none but earth's loveliest! And the superb head and neck! She must be beautiful! Oh, it was a very sweet voice. But I will walk on and forget it—for she must be noble—and what has a poor student to do with noble maidens, be they fair or not?"

With a sigh which he soon changed to a light-hearted whistle, he settled his pack to his shoulders, grasped his staff, and with a free step, descended the hill into the Campana.

CHAPTER II.

In a recess of one of the galleries resorted to by the numerous students that, from all parts of the world, throng to Rome to seize upon the fast-fading glories of an era when genius seemed to have chosen Italy for the throne of her empire, there sat, in front of an exquisite Madonna of Titian, a young artist, with his easel before him, intently engaged in transferring the picture, with a skill little less than his whom he imitated, to his canvas.

He was attired in a close green jacket, and white trousers, and beside him lying on the floor was an old and much worn velvet cap.

His dark hazel eyes were filled with the light of genius, and his handsome face glowed with the passion of his heart as he sat and copied.

He was apart from the other students who frequented the gallery, and seemed to be wholly indifferent to the gay crowd that promenaded the saloon, of whom now and then some connoisseur, attracted by his silent industry, would turn his eyes toward the subject of his attention, and with the self-assured look of a *savant*, lip out, "a Titian," and pass on—otherwise, the young painter pursued his labours alone and unnoticed.

That he is the youthful pilgrim whom we first saw looking down upon the Campana may be gathered, perhaps, from his costume, as well as his pursuit. This is the ninth day he has been in Rome.

It was near the hour for closing the gallery, and but a few persons remained, when an elderly gentleman of noble exterior, and with the courtly air of a man of high birth, passed near the position occupied by the painter, a lovely young creature leaning on

his arm, and a tall, beautiful, but somewhat haughty young lady preceding them a few steps in advance.

The attention of the latter was instantly arrested by the animated countenance of the youthful student, as he caught at the same time inspiration equally in religion and in his art, from the subject and its painter, and approaching him, she unconsciously began to gaze on his face as if he had been one of the inanimate heads that hung around her.

"Why, Eleanor, what has fascinated you so?" cried the young lady on the arm of the gentleman, after watching her, for an instant, in amazed wonder.

The lady addressed instantly recovered herself, blushingly changed the direction of her eyes, and for a few seconds seemed to study, with persevering attention, an old landscape on the wall.

Scarcely were the words spoken that produced this effect, when the young painter, who had hitherto seemed insensible to any external expression, started back from his canvas with the involuntary exclamation:

"The same voice!"

His eyes, as he spoke, were riveted on the lovely speaker, who, in her turn, regarded him with surprise.

But her face appeared to have an electric effect upon him; for no sooner did he see it than, clapping his hands together, he said with astonishing vehemence, fixing the while his full gaze upon her angelic countenance:

"Titian's Madonna!"

"What can he mean, cousin? Uncle, ask him," cried the young lady, who had been addressed as Eleanor, retreating to them with some alarm at this sudden outbreak.

"He is certainly a strange young man," said the gentleman; "one of the eccentricities, doubtless, of his pursuit."

"He is certainly very handsome," said the young lady who had leaned upon him.

The next moment she added:

"His gaze confuses me, father; shall we go?"

But, regardless of the surprise of one and the embarrassment of the other, the painter continued to gaze upon the maiden, till she dropped her head in confusion, and turned to fly. Then he silently pointed to the canvas on the easel before him.

The gentleman had scarcely cast a glance upon it ere he exclaimed, with undigested astonishment: "My daughter's portrait! Laura—Lady Eleanor, look here!"

"Can I believe my own eyes!" said the latter.

And after looking for a few moments at the painting, she turned and gave a puzzled look at her cousin, and then at the handsome young artist, who seemed no less surprised than the opposite party.

"How came you by this portrait, sir?" demanded the gentleman, somewhat haughtily.

The youth pointed silently to the original on the wall.

"It is the same," was the remark of the astonished beholder. "A Titian, is it not?"

"None other," was the calm reply.

"Wonderful coincidence! And this is your copy?"

"I have this moment completed it."

"And did no knowledge of its resemblance to my fair cousin here prompt you to begin it?" asked Lady Eleanor, glancing with painful irony at the maiden.

"My surprise, lady, at the discovery, is no less than your own."

"The copy is the most like you, my child," said the gentleman, after contemplating both awhile; "the colours being fresher, and retaining more of the tint of life. I will purchase it of you, sir."

The young painter, whose eyes had not ceased to dwell on the lovely personification of his copy, each moment drinking into his soul her beauty, like new wine, till he was intoxicated with love, either did not hear or was too absorbed in his daring and newly-awakened passion to regard the proposition; and when the moment afterwards it was repeated, he replied in a tone so decided as to partake of rudeness:

"Buy! Buy it! No, sir. It is sacred!"

"It is a Madonna, indeed—but Madonnas may be purchased, for a trifle, in every stall in Rome," responded the gentleman, with some asperity. "I will pay you one hundred guineas for the piece—tis but a hasty sketch at the best, and you—you—he hesitated as he glanced over his coarse apparel—"it is, perhaps, much more than you are in the habit of getting for simple copies."

"It is a hundred guineas more than I get for any picture. This is the first I have attempted myself."

"Do you subsist by this profession?"

"I hope to do so, sir."

"And refuse the simple remuneration for what you say is your first piece. Will you dispose of it?"

"No, sir."

"Know, young man, that the portrait you refuse to give up is, by a miracle, that of Lady Laura Linton, daughter of the Earl of Linton, who now addresses you."

"My lord," said the youth, firmly, but respectfully, "I will not part with it. So much more noble is the fair being whom it resembles, so much more sacred does it become to me."

As he spoke, his eyes rested modestly and reverently on the cast-down face of the maiden.

"Through this accidental resemblance it possesses, in my eyes, a far nobler character, my lord, than it can challenge. The spirit of a new Divinity has now descended upon it, and inspires each lovely lineament, No, my lord, I will not part with it."

Lady Laura well understood the plain, bold words he uttered, and though she felt that she ought to resent the attitude he assumed, yet she found herself unable—nay, disinclined to reprove, even with a look, a compliment so sincere, and originating from a coincidence so singular as that conveyed in his determination to keep her portrait.

"Is it for myself alone, or for the strangeness of the circumstances, that influences this resolution?" she asked of herself.

But before she could receive a satisfactory reply, the old nobleman, who was not blind to this little passage of gallantry on the score of the humble student, muttering something reflecting on the impertinence of the young Italian painter,

That exist on a maravilla month,

drew her arm within his; then, accompanied by his niece, Lady Eleanor, he left the gallery.

On their way to the carriage the latter, who was the only daughter of the powerful Duke of Cadwallader, travelling in Italy under Lord Linton's protection, made herself both witty and merry, as much to the annoyance of the father as daughter, on the conquest of Lady Laura over the poor student; but the conversation naturally soon turned upon the extraordinary coincidence which they had just witnessed.

The youth listened until he heard the carriage move away from the door, whoa, rolling up his canvas, he left the gallery and sought his humble lodgings.

CHAPTER III.

It was the third day of the carnival, and grown men and women became once more children. The streets were filled with fantastic pageants, strangely mingled with religious processions.

The discordant music of the *charivari* resounded through the streets which, centuries before, gave back the notes of the warlike trumpet, and the scarcely less warlike shouts that attended triumphal entries.

Every man and woman in Rome now had license to play the fool.

Balconies were thronged with lovely women, with their heads tastefully dressed, with dark eyes and snowy hands, filling the air with musical laughter, while they cast flowers concealing a heavy sugar plum within their leaves, eggs beautifully dyed, and filled with scented wafer, and handfuls of bon-bons in showers upon the passing cavaliers, whether on foot or horseback.

And many was the gay gallant, who, essaying to scale the balconies and avenge himself, according to immemorial usage, on the lips of the fairest of its defenders, was forced back to the ground by the brisk discharge of sugared missiles, that descended into his face and eyes like grape-shot.

The whole city was a scene of gaiety and dazzling confusion.

Strangers from all parts of Europe rode through the thronged streets in their carriages, to behold the various spectacles, adding, by the splendour of their equipages, to the brilliancy of the scene.

It happened that as an English chariot and pair, containing a gentleman and two young ladies, were crossing the area encompassing Trajan's pillar, one of those perfumed missiles, missing its original aim, struck one of the spirited horses in the eye, and so terrified the animal, that bounding to a great height in his traces, he broke from the carriage and his fellow, and dragging the coachman to the ground, dashed through the crowded thoroughfare, at the wildest rate, the fragments of his broken harness flying about his heels.

The noise they made, as well as the pain they inflicted, added wings to his mad speed, and everywhere his presence changed the sound of merriment to cries of terror and alarm.

The remaining horse plunged terrifically for a few seconds, without offering to run, during which interval, the gentleman, who was the Earl of Linton, leaped to the ground, succeeded in assisting Lady Eleanor to alight, and was in the act of extending his arms, as the danger grew imminent, imploringly towards his daughter, entreating her as she stood undecided, to risk the jump, when, with a mad leap, the

single horse started forward with the chariot, throwing the maiden back again upon the seat, where, with her hands clasped together, a colourless cheek, and an air of calm resignation such as woman only can wear in extremest peril, she awaited, what appeared to every beholder inevitable death.

But her eyes were cool and steady, and she appeared to survey the road along which she was borne as if on the wings of the wind; and to weigh, with something like the calculations of hope, the chances of escape.

At a speed that defied all hope of check, even to the boldest that saw the vehicle whirled past them, the horse flew with the chariot in the direction of the Via Appia, overturning every obstacle in his progress, and emerging into a square thronged with revellers, and surrounded by gay booths which opened on the Tiber, he took his course, maddened to fury by the shouts that followed him, directly across the space towards the river, which at the point he aimed for was several feet lower than the quay, and covered with small boats.

He was within a few yards of the water, and in a second or two would have leaped with the carriage into the midst of the crowded stream, when a young man in the dress of a student for the galleries sprang from a booth in which he had been bargaining for painters' colours, and struck the enraged animal smartly upon the right side of the head with a long staff.

At the same instant, at the imminent risk of his life, he threw himself forward in the direction the horse was flying, and fastening his grasp on the bit, pulled him short round with a dexterity and skill that seemed above mortal man's, and turned from his fatal course, while the air rung with the applauding shouts of the multitude.

His speed, however, was not lessened by this diversion from his former line of flight; and though no longer moving in the direction of the Tiber, he now strove to press forward in an opposite one. But the youth, with a hand on each side of his mouth, held him with a grasp that governed his emotions, so that, restrained in every endeavour to bound forward, his movements became confined to a circle, in which he whirled the carriage with fearful velocity, dragging the resolute youth at his bit, whose whole strength and presence of mind were required to keep him to the centre, from which, every instant he threatened to bolt.

The excitement of the multitude now became intense. The lady in the carriage, in whom, at the first glance, on emerging from the booth, the young painter had recognized the original of his copy, sat with her eyes fixed on him, full of gratitude and hope, while all fear seemed to be turned from herself to him.

Round and round in a ring that each moment decreased in diameter, the chariot flew, while, at his head, his body braced outward almost horizontally, and his whole weight thrown inward, hung the young student, with a hold that death alone could loose—for he knew, with every soul present, that the life of the maiden depended solely on his coolness, courage and perseverance.

Altogether it was a spectacle of terrific sublimity; the mighty efforts of the horse to break away from the centre, about which the youth resolved that he should exhaust his fire; his swelled muscles, foaming mouth, and bloodshot eyes, and the powerful action of his thundering hoof; the dizzy whirl of the scarcely visible wheel; the hope against hope that animated the face of the noble girl; and the resolute air—the fixed eye—compressed lips—the full veins of the forehead, seemingly bursting with blood, and the bared right arm, on which the chords stood out like rods of iron, of the master spirit of the scene!

The interest of the throng in the fate of the gallant youth seemed at one time to take the place of their sympathy for the lady—for gallantry, in the eye of human admiration, often presents claims superior to those of beauty.

"Let him loose and save yourself," cried one among the crowd.

"You will never check him, young man, but sacrifice your own life," shouted a French marquis, from his horse.

"Hold on for your life, my good lad," cried an English naval officer, near; "he begins to flag."

"You will soon break him down, young man, if you can hold out a few moments longer," cried an Englishman.

But the student heard them not—his whole soul being intent on subduing the energies of the furious animal; and by the expression of his eyes, it was plain that he had confidence in himself, and knew that he must gain the mastery.

For full ten minutes the horse maintained his mettle; he then began to show that he felt the weight and pressure at his head, and to evince signs of giving out.

The circle to which his antagonist kept him,

momentarily grew narrower, and he found less and less room for his movements; the sweat at length ran like water from his glossy skin, his breath came shorter and quicker, and his limbs trembled; and now each revolution he made, the shouts of the multitude became louder and louder, for at every round he showed himself weaker than at the preceding, and ready to yield to the superiority—not of strength, but human intelligence—of the young student. He himself was not unobservant of these symptoms of surrender, and watching his time, suddenly pressed the animal's nose to the ground while he was yet going at considerable speed, then throwing his whole weight upon his shoulders, dragged him bodily to his knees, and as he intended to do, overset the chariot; but thought it not quicker than the bound he made to its side as it was falling over, and ere she reached the ground, the maiden was caught in his arms.

"My dear child!" cried the Earl of Linton, springing forward barched and breathless, receiving her from him to fold in his paternal embrace.

"Dear father I am safe," she could only articulate, and swooned away.

For a few moments her situation engaged the attention of the numerous ladies and gentlemen who had reached the spot expecting to find the young lady injured, if not dashed to pieces. When at length her restoration gave the nobleman time to look around for her the youth, whose praises were in all men's mouths, he was nowhere to be seen.

For several days, every inquiry was made for the student; the galleries visited, the public promenades watched, and even rewards offered for information respecting him—for the gratitude of Lord Linton and his daughter, was a load too great to be lightly thrown off without a commensurate effort to find the individual who had laid it upon them.

It was apparent that he must have quitted Rome, for Florence, probably, or some one of the numerous schools of art that abound in southern Italy; and the search having proved ineffectual, was finally abandoned, though reluctantly, by the fair Lady Laura, who had permitted, besides gratitude, another emotion, near akin to it, to take root in her heart.

Although the earl ceased to think of him, save when the circumstance of her escape was mentioned, the memory of the young painter was warmly cherished by both consorts, for his gallantry had even won over the admiration of the haughty Lady Eleanor; besides, there was a mystery thrown around him, independent of his personal conduct, which lent a new and peculiar interest to him in their eyes, not the less strong that both his name and country were alike unknown.

CHAPTER IV.

NEAR the close of a London season, four years after the events related in the last chapter, a party of visitors were one morning lounging through the magnificent rooms of the Royal Academy, when they came to a group of persons who were commenting in the highest terms of encomium on a picture before which they stood.

"What truth of colouring!"

"What exquisite finish to that hand laid over the bosom!"

"And those uplifted eyes—are they not eloquent with prayer and love?"

"Tis a Titian, I think, by the manner," remarked a fourth person.

"A copy only, sir. I know who the painter is," said an old connoisseur, decidedly.

"Who is it?" inquired several voices.

"He is called Alfred, and is said to be a gipsy," was the reply.

"What, the same extraordinary youth, with whose praise all London is ringing?" asked an amateur. "Well, he deserves the praises that are lavished upon him."

The party just spoken of, consisting of the Earl of Linton and his daughter, Lady Cadwallader, and others, now came near this group, and arrested by their conversation, stopped to survey the picture. It was the Madonna that they had seen on the student's easel, years before, in Rome.

Lady Laura Linton cast but a single glance at the painting, when with a cry of joy she threw herself on her father's shoulder and burst into tears.

Lord Linton recognized the picture, and with a quick penetration divined her emotion, while Lady Eleanor Cadwallader said, pointedly:

"Was I not right, uncle, when I said that this picture was the cause of Cousin Laura's pale cheek and drooping health?"

The group about the picture were too much occupied with it to notice this by-scene, or were so well-bred as to affect not to perceive it.

"Laura, my dear, we will descend to the carriage," said the earl, tenderly, as she raised her head and dashed the tears away from her eyes.

The maiden, instead of replying, suddenly seized his hand and directed it towards a picture a little to the right of the Madonna.

He started at beholding a vivid representation of the scene in Rome—the portrait of Laura in the chariot was not to be mistaken, so faithfully had the painter done his work, while the likeness of the student at the horse's head was drawn to the life.

"He remembered me, then," murmured the gentle earl, as she suffered herself to be led away by the earl, who made no other comment than a frown at this new discovery.

CHAPTER V.

EARLY the ensuing morning, the Earl of Linton drove to the Academy, and demanded of the keeper the name and address of the painter of the two pieces which he indicated.

"He is called Alfred the Gipsy, my lord."

"He who has made so much noise in the world for his picture of Cain?"

"The same, your lordship."

"Is he now in London?"

"He is, my lord."

"I will take his address."

Twenty minutes afterwards, the carriage of the nobleman drew up at the entrance of a narrow court, where he alighted, and after descending a few steps, came to a door, which by a flight of carpeted stairs communicated with a spacious room on the first floor.

In this room, which was plainly hung with green cloth, relieved by a few valuable old pictures and one or two more recent works, stood at his easel a fine looking young man, with an exceedingly dark complexion, on whose noble features dwelt a cloud of settled melancholy.

It was the young painter of Rome, known as "Alfred the Gipsy," who after three years wandering in Italy had opened a studio in London, and already, by the unaided efforts of his own genius and industry, placed his name, with honourable mention, in the mouths of all men.

The picture before him was the Madonna of Titian, not the copy, but the original, of which before leaving Italy, he had succeeded in gaining possession. He was gazing on it with a look between that of a reverent worshipper and an adoring lover.

Suddenly he heard a footstep in his room, and looking up, he beheld and recognized the nobleman so intimately connected with her who at that moment shared his thoughts.

The recognition was mutual.

In a few courteous words Lord Linton expressed his regret at the long interval he had suffered to elapse before the opportunity which now presented itself had been met with, to thank him for the service he had rendered himself and family in rescuing his child from a dreadful death; and informed him of the numerous inquiries that had been made after him in Rome to no purpose.

"And," he added, "having a few days since returned to England, after a long residence in the south of Europe, I accidentally met with a picture in the Royal Academy, which is so closely associated with yourself, that, confident you must be in London, I obtained your address, and hastened at once hither that I might finally release myself from the debt of gratitude your gallantry has imposed on me. Permit me, sir, with my expression of thanks, to offer you at the same time, not as a compensation or reward, but as a further proof of my grateful consideration, the enclosed cheque for one thousand pounds."

The young painter bowed, while he said, respectfully:

"My life is not bought, my lord. I need no reward. I never gaze on this picture that I am not thanked; and each hour of my existence I am blessed with the consciousness that the lovely personification of this prophetic picture of Titian's before me lives and is happy."

The old noble walked to the front of the easel to look at the picture, and his face glowed as he beheld the miraculous likeness of his daughter.

His aristocratic pride could not endure that one so humble should possess—to plain as fuel to his daring passion—the picture of his high-born child, and this feeling overcoming his gratitude, he resolved to possess the portrait.

"Young man, you presume too far on the power your art gives you, and take, methinks, undue advantage of an accidental resemblance found in this copy from an oil-painting. It is prostrating your god-like art to the lowest uses. The possession of this picture, under the circumstances connected with it, is a moral theft—a sort of forgery that no honourable man will uphold—no honest man be guilty of. You will oblige me by either destroying this picture, or placing it in my keeping. I will become its purchaser at your own price."

"My lord, it is not to be bought. It is dear to me as life!" he replied, with animation.

"How, sir? Remember, young painter, it is a portrait of my daughter—of Lady Laura Linton—you speak! Beware, Sir Gipsy!"

"Hear me, my lord," said the young man, addressing the offended noble in a voice so respectful in its tone, yet so earnest, that he could not refuse to listen; "hear me and then judge me! I am a painter—a gipsy if you will—but in my bosom throbs a heart as warm as that which beats in the breast of a nobleman. That heart is noble—its feelings noble—its hopes, wishes, all that constitute it, I feel it noble—it is a human heart, my lord; in a word it is a man's heart, and as a man I love. The object of my passion is your daughter."

"Ha!"

"Patiently, my lord, I have but thrice seen her, and have never yet spoken with her—yet I love her, for she is a woman, though an earl's daughter. But the canons of social order place her as far above me as the Madonna before me. I have, therefore, chastened my deep love, and wedded it to my faith, and worship a heavenly and earthly divinity both at the same time in this seraphic face. Be not offended, my lord; my thoughts are not less holy, whether I see in it for the moment, Lady Laura Linton, or the Virgin. In fine, my lord, vain love has grown into a religion, and in the likeness of your daughter I behold only a divinity. Ask me not, then, to part with it, my lord. Let me not be denied the happiness of adoring afar off her I may not love at present. Let me be blessed with the ideal presence of her whom birth and fortune have placed for ever beyond my possession. It can give no offence to thee—she will never know of my humble love. Refuse me not this prayer, my lord!"

He stood before the earl, with a look so eloquently pleading—so modest, yet so earnest—that the earl, already moved by this singular appeal to his feelings, suddenly grasped him by the hand and was about to speak, when, as if emotion had overcome him, and he feared to trust his voice, he signed towards the picture with a gesture of assent. For a few seconds afterwards he paced in silence, and then turning to the painter, said:

"I know not what to make of you, young sir! We have so often and so singularly met; your strange appellation—your genius, courage, ambition and romantic character, all mark you as no ordinary person. You speak English like a native; yet in your pronunciation of some words there is something, I know not what, that is foreign—and your complexion, too. Are you English or Italian?"

"I am a gipsy, my lord!"

"Ah, true. An English gipsy. This accounts for your swarthy hue."

"Yet I believe, my lord, that I am an Englishman by birth."

"How?"

"It is my impression, from the early passages in my memory, that I must have been stolen from my parents."

"Indeed. You interest me. What do you remember?"

"Though almost all of my recollections are of gipsy life, I feel very confident of having once lived in another sphere. But until my fifteenth year, excepting a very hasty period of childhood, I was a gipsy. At this age, a bachelor gentleman in Sussex, taking a fancy to me as we were encamped near his house, enticed me from the tribe, and put me to school. Three years afterwards, he was thrown from his horse and killed; and there being no provision left for me, he having made no will, I was cast upon my fortunes. I sought London, and having had from boyhood a taste for rude sketching, I offered my services to a portrait painter, who, finding I exhibited some talent, offered to become my master, while his instructions I was to repay by doing the drudge work of the profession. I remained with him nearly two years, when, inspired with a desire to visit the great school of art, Italy, I left England with only a few guineas in my pocket, and on foot travelled from Calais to Rome, where, in the Gallery of the Cardinals, you soon afterwards met me."

"What recollections have you of a home prior to your gipsy associations?" asked the earl, after a few moments' reflection.

"An impression, like the relics of a pleasant dream, dwells upon my earliest memory (but I cannot say that I may not really have dreamed it all), of costly furniture and gorgeous halls, and servants in liveries of gold and blue, among which my infancy seems to have been passed. I certainly remember the face of a lovely and elegant female, bent close to mine; and to this moment her image is never revivified without bringing with it the impulse to say 'mother.' If, my lord, I were to represent on canvas the ideal of 'mother,' a pictorial hieroglyphic of the word, I should instinctively paint that face as the symbol."

"Do you recollect it then, so vividly? Transfer it

to canvas, if you have the skill to do it, and it may lead to the discovery of your birth."

"Often have I done it on the bark of the beach-tree, with the walnut juice with which the gypsies dye the skins of those who join them, and with which my face and hands are stained—the rest of my body being fair, a proof that I am not of gipsy blood, my lord."

"Ah! it is a strong, nay, convincing proof! You must paint the picture."

"I will do it my lord, but have little hopes of its being useful to me."

A few more unimportant questions were asked by the earl, who, then rising, expressed the interest his story had awakened, and promising his aid, whenever he should require it, towards ascertaining his parentage, took his leave.

Left alone, the young painter paced his room with a fevered step. His thoughts ran into the channel the last conversation had opened for them, and he tasked his memory to its utmost, to bring vividly back to his mind its first impressions.

"If I could yet prove my birth—but no, I may be only a country gentleman's son, and this would not bring me near her. Oh, untoward fate and fortune, thou hast placed my love so high, that even hope cannot reach her."

As he walked, memory went upward to his childhood, step by step, and brought before him a scene, which from a thousand associations, he knew must have been the haunt of his early years. He called to mind an old tower, perched on a wooded hill, with a stone bridge arched a foaming torrent beneath.

Beside the bridge was a vine-clad cottage, and, not far below it, a church with a peculiar spire; still farther beyond were the roofs of a village; and, towering over all, rose a noble castle, and in the back-ground was a chain of blue hills rising here and there into a peak.

The whole he seemed to view from the bridge. Every object in the scene was painted on the retina of early memory, with the distinctness of present vision.

"This, my heart tells me," he said, as he paced the floor, "this is my birth-place! I remember it all! How it all comes back to memory! It was in that cottage I lived. I was a foster-child—I had a foster-brother, too—I remember it all so vividly! In yonder castle lived my fathers! Oh, memory, blessed memory, I thank thee! I remember it all! I am no outcast!"

For a few seconds he gave way to the feelings of the moment, then, as if checked by some startling reflection, he stood still and groaned aloud.

"Alas, alas! what avails this light, which, after years of darkness and of ignorance, heaven has permitted to break in upon me. I know not in what part of England, if in England at all (yet it is an English scene), it is situated. An outcast and nameless I still am. Wretched! Wretched!"

He threw himself on a chair, and burying his face in his hands, remained for a long time, silent and gloomy.

All at once he sprang from his seat, placed fresh canvas on the easel—seized his palette and brush, and began to paint with a rapidity and energy that seemed as if he feared that the image he was transferring from his brain would flee away ere he could impress it indelibly upon the canvas.

Like magic, a lovely landscape grew beneath his skilful touches, and ere twilight was lost in the darkness of night, he had produced on the canvas a picture of the scene that memory had painted on his brain.

CHAPTER VI.

"Have you seen the mysterious painting?" was the salutation with which acquaintances greeted each other, at a fashionable party, a few evenings after the interview that had taken place between the Earl of Linton and Alfred the Gipsy.

"How very odd, isn't it?" said a very dressy lady, fanning herself with a peacock's tail.

"Tis said he takes this method to learn his birth-place," remarked a spare gentleman near her, who alternately sipped an ice and wiped with a cambric embroidered handkerchief his bald forehead.

"And does he really offer five hundred pounds to whomsoever will recognise it, and identify it with any natural scene?" asked a brisk little gentleman in black, with a calculating eye and thin lips.

"Indeed he does," responded the lady with the fan, "and thousands have been to see it already."

"Have you been to see it, Lady Gross?"

"No," was the reply, with a toss of the head; "I fear they might think I wanted to get the five hundred pounds."

It was true. All London was astir with the singular announcement that had been made, the morning after he had completed his picture, by the young painter, "that the sum of five hundred pounds sterling should be given to any individual who would

identify a landscape painting, to be seen at his rooms, with any known spot in Great Britain, or elsewhere."

Thousands flocked to his studio, and thronged around the painting, which was placed on the easel in the centre of the room, in a position that exposed it to the best light.

Day after day brought curious visitors of every degree, from the humblest artisan to the noblest in the land; and day after day passed by, without any recognition of the painting.

In vain the artist watched for the appearance of the Linton party—not that he looked to them for a discovery; but that, perchance, he might once more see the object of his hallowed love.

But the earl had left for one of his seats in the north the day following his visit to the studio, and in the retirement of the country knew not of the means taken by the youth to learn the secret of his birth.

Not so his daughter and niece.

The gossip of the journals, which he scarcely glanced at in seeking political news, was eagerly purposed by them, and they were not long in ignorance of the reward offered, and of its object.

Lady Laura had heard his story from her father, and need not be said that her interest in him was strengthened; nor will it surprise the female reader to learn that a few days afterwards there appeared an additional offer, from an unknown source, of five hundred pounds; nor will it be very difficult, though it perplexed the modest young painter to do so, to discover the fair hand from which it originated—which hand, at the same time, enclosed a bill for the additional sum. But success seemed as far off as before.

Finally the patience of the young artist was weakened by disappointment, and he began to prepare his mind, fortifying it with his best philosophy, to submit to his untoward destiny.

"I will let it remain on the easel for this day longer, and then, with the setting sun, sets my star of hope for ever."

Late in the day on which he came to this resolution, he was alone in his studio, standing before the picture which had excited so much curiosity, listlessly touching it and thero with his pencil, adding to different parts as memory suggested, when the door opened, and a clown, dressed in a coarse frock and trousers, with a cart-whip in his hand, thrust in his curly head. After gazing about a few seconds as if doubtful of his ground, he advanced his shoulders, and then protruded into the room his whole body. The painter watched his motions with amused curiosity, and waited for him to make known his business.

"Be this the place whar the grand picture be?"

"There it is," said the artist, with an impatient gesture, for his patience had often been tried by dull persons of his degree, who, tempted by so large a reward, had in great numbers visited his room.

"I coom'd up to Lon'on with the waggon, thee seas, master, and hearin' from John Ostler 'bout this pictur', I thought I'd coom an'take a look on'; for a thousan' pounds beent coom at every day, master."

"Look and be speedy," he said, hastily; "in five minutes the picture will be removed."

With the air of one cautiously approaching a lion, he walked round in front of the picture, its position on the easel being such as to present its edge to one entering, and placing himself before it with his arms akimbo, began to stare at it with a knowing consequential air.

But scarcely had his eyes taken in the scene, when they opened to their full width, and a beam of intelligence lighted up his florid countenance.

He thrust his neck out, then drew it in; approached and retreated; surveyed it to the right and to the left; looked through his fist at a distance; and then almost touched the canvas with his nose, as if (it appeared) to be certain of a resemblance that he detected.

At length he seemed to be convinced; for suddenly clapping his hands, and emitting a loud whistle, he stooped down in the attitude of one looking through a telescope, or a key-hole, with one hand, which contained his cart-whip, the other his hat, resting on each knee, and in this position began to scan it in detail, and speaking to himself, while growing surprise and delight were visible on every feature.

"There be mither's cottage, by jimmie! and thers's the old apple tree above the bridge I'se clumb many a time; and thers's the old haunted tower on the hill, and yonder his lordship's castle; and if there beant the stone church whar I was christened, and ayont it, the village whar—"

The young painter, who had detected the incipient signs of recognition, and received new life with each word he uttered, stood by him as he was speaking, his palette extended in one hand, and his pencil in the other, like a statue of surprise, while his fine counten-

ance was illuminated with the radiance of the new-risen hope.

"Hold! enough!" he cried, dashing his palette to the floor, and laying his hand on the shoulder of the young countryman, "what tower? what lord? what village? what church?"

"Feck, master, thee doest put thy questions thick as hedge-berries. It's mither's cottage and the parson's church—don't I know 'em?"

"But the name of the village?"

"Deil a name I knows else."

"Nor that of the castle."

"It's his lordship's, sure."

"But who is his lordship—quickly?"

"It's my lord, he is."

"But his title?"

"Anan."

In vain did he question him closer. The peasant could only tell that the castle belonged to "his lordship." He reflected a moment.

The evidence of the clown was strong; for it was plain from his countenance, when he made the recognition, that it was without premeditation, and perfectly natural, and not a trick to impose upon him.

He resolved to act upon it, and instantly his course was taken.

"Do you know the road to this village and castle?"

"That I do, master, every inch on't."

"When do you go back?"

"In the morning, I'm doubting."

"With your waggon?"

"Yes, master."

"Leave your waggon at the inn; I will be chargeable for your horses' keeping. Take post with me to-night, and guide me to the place you seem to have recognized. Do you not know even the county it is in?"

"Summer-shire."

"And how far?"

"Forty-five miles or so." "Show me the spot and I will pay you the one thousand pounds."

"Doon," said the clown.

CHAPTER VII.

An hour before the sun set on the day he left London, with the young countryman by his side, the painter drew up, with smoking horses, before the small town of a pretty hamlet in Somersetshire.

"And this is the village?" he asked his companion, as he alighted.

"It be zur, and yonder's the lane to mither's, up by the bridge."

"Landlord, the name of this village?"

"Merwin, your honour."

"And yonder castle?"

"The Earl of Cadwallader's seat."

"Thank you. Lead the way to the cottage."

These last words were addressed to the young peasant, who, striding on before, led him through a wooded lane, from which opened an extensive and lovely prospect—a genuine English landscape made up of river and park, castle and village, tower and hamlet.

He gave but a single glance, and fell on his knees with his face to the earth.

"It is—it is—my own native home!"

Before him he beheld spread out the identical scene—the cottage in the foreground—the tower, crowning a hill on his right—the lordly pile, which he now knew to be Cadwallader Castle; with the village, river, spire, and distant range of blue hills—one and all just as he had painted them.

He rose to his feet, and without speaking, from the fulness of his heart, preceded the peasant along a narrow gravel walk, which led to the cottage, following each winding with a rapid and familiar footstep.

"I remember every stone, every tree, as if I had last seen them only yesterday," he said, as he walked along.

In the door of the cottage sat a respectable, elderly dame, knitting.

Looking up at his step, she hospitably invited him to enter.

"Walk in, sir, walk in. Ah, son Will, you're home soon, lad," she added, descrying her son behind. "So you have brought a stranger from Lon'on?"

"He brought me, mither. We coom'd in a four-horse coach."

"Hoit, ye're crankie, lad. What have the likes of you to do in a four-horse coach? Mind your own waggon, and think not o' anything above it."

"My good dame," said the young man, "if there is blame anywhere, it lies with me. Permit me to put a few questions to you."

"Take a seat, sir, take a seat. Will, give his honour a chair. Yes, sir, I will try and answer them to my best. Well, now."

"Oh, how memory rushes upon me! Methinks I am at home here. Her voice sounds like one familiar—all I see and hear is associated with my earliest impressions—her spectacles seem like old friends. Oh, that my wishes and hopes may be realized! Wretched, indeed, should I be, to be disappointed now!"

Such were the thoughts that filled his mind as he asked, with a hesitating voice:

"Were you ever a foster-mother?"

"Alack-a-day! Ah, your honour has come to open an old wound in my poor heart! Indeed I have been, sir."

"To whose child?"

"My lord's."

"What lord?"

"Cadwallader, who lives in the castle yonder. Poor nobleman, he has not smiled since."

"Since when? Speak, I pray you."

"Why, your honour, I had his only son to nurse, and he being delicate, I kept him after he was weaned, till he was five years old; for they liked to have him play about with my boy Will, here, who was the same age. They wanted to make him hardy, you must know, and so I brought 'em up alike, letting his lordship run here and there as he would, just as if he had been my own."

"Well."

"Well, your honour. Ah, woe's me! One day he went out alone to gather apples from the old tree by the bridge (for he would climb to its very top, he had got so brave and stout), and not coming home to his breakfast, I felt very anxious about him and went to seek him. But—"

"But from that day to this you have not seen his face."

"It's the dear truth, your honour. The gentle- fered he had fallen from the bridge, and the river was searched in vain. But I thought—"

"What thought you?"

"That the gypsies had stolen him?"

"Should you know him if he were living?"

"Know him, the dear child! I would know him a hundred years hence—his sweet smile, curly hair and rosy, fat cheeks!"

"But time would soon change these. Had he any natural mark by which he might be recognised?"

"Two of them, your honour."

"What were they?"

"A strawberry and leaf on his neck below the right ear, and the scar of my steel watch-key here, which, having fallen into the grate, he drew it out while red hot, and left the print on the palm and inside the fingers of his left hand. He was just four, the day he did it."

The young painter removed his cravat with a trembling hand and palpitating heart.

"Is that like the strawberry and leaf, good mother? And," he added, spreading open his left hand, "is this the impress of the key?"

As he spoke he displayed the marks she had described; the strawberry on his neck, and the visible shape of a watch-key burned into the skin of his left palm.

She looked first at one and then at the other, bewildered between doubt and joy; then gazed a moment scrutinizingly into his features, till by degrees she saw confessed before her the express image of her foster-boy.

With a cry of joy she extended her arms:

"It is Alfred, my foster-child—God has given him to me again!"

Thus speaking, she sunk into the embrace that was open to receive her.

CONCLUSION.

A FEW words will finish our story. The proper steps were taken to prove the identity of "Alfred the Gipsy" with the lost heir of Cadwallader, both by the young painter himself and the Earl of Linton.

The chief of the gipsy horde was sought after and found, and confessed having stolen the child, knowing it to be the son of the Earl of Cadwallader, and further, that the painter and that child was one and the same.

Notwithstanding Alfred's industry in collecting evidence, his delicacy restrained him from visiting Cadwallader Castle, to seek an interview with its broken-hearted lord.

But now with the proof in his own hand, to which he added the portrait of his mother taken from memory, he was conveyed thither in the carriage of Lord Linton, who accompanied him in person and presented him to the duke.

No sooner had the noble lord placed his eyes upon him than, waiving all other evidences, except those of a father's heart, he rushed towards him, and acknowledged him as his son.

"God has written upon his face the lineaments of his mother. My son, my son!"

"My brother!" and the arms of the beautiful and

haughty Lady Eleanor were also entwined around him.

In a few months afterwards, Alfred the Gipsy, now Lord Cadwallader, led to the altar Laura, the lovely daughter of the proud Earl of Linton; Eleanor Cadwallader being one of the bridesmaids. And so did the love of the noble maiden for the poor painter meet with its due reward.

F. C. B.

THE TWO PORTRAITS.

"BEAUTIFUL! beautiful!" exclaimed Ernest Lavalle, as, throwing himself back in his chair, he contemplated, with eyes shut, a lovely countenance that smiled on him from a canvas to which he had just added a few hesitating touches.

It was but a sketch—little more than outline and dead colouring, and a misty haze seemed spread over the face, so that it looked vision-like and intangible. The young painter's exclamation was not addressed to his workmanship—he was not even looking at that faint image; but, through its medium, was gazing on lineaments as rare and fascinating as ever floated through a poet's or an artist's dream.

Deep, lustrous blue eyes, in whose depth sincerity and feeling lay, crystallised; features as regular as that of a Grecian statue; a lip melting, ripe and dewy, half concealing, half revealing, a line of pearls; soft brown hair descending in waves upon a neck and shoulders of satin surface and Parian firmness. Such were some of the external traits of loveliness belonging to

A creature not too bright and good,
For human nature's daily food,

who had completely actualized the ideal of the young Parisian artist, into whose studio we have introduced our readers.

The fair original, whose portrait is before us, was Rose d'Amour, a beautiful actress of one of the metropolitan theatres, who had just made her *début* with distinguished success.

There was quite a romance in her history. Of unknown parents, she had commenced her career—like the celebrated Rachel—a street singer, and was looking forward to no more brilliant future, when her beauty, genius, and purity of character attracted the attention of a distinguished newspaper editor, by whose benevolent generosity she was enabled to prepare herself for the stage, by two or three years of assiduous study. The success of his *protégé* more than repaid the kind patron for his exertions and expenditure.

A word of Ernest Lavalle, and it shall suffice.

He was the son of an humble vine-dresser, in one of the agricultural districts of France. His talent for drawing, early manifested, attracted the notice of his parish priest, whose earnest representations induced his father to send the boy to Paris, and give him the advantages afforded by the capital for students of art.

In the great city Ernest allowed none of the attractions by which he was surrounded to divert him from the assiduous pursuit of his beloved art.

His mornings were passed in the gallery of the Louvre, his afternoons in private study, and his evenings at the academy, where he drew from casts and the living model.

The only relaxation he permitted himself was an occasional excursion in the picturesque environs of the French capital; and he always took his sketch book with him, thus making even his pleasure subservient to his studies.

Two prizes obtained for a drawing and a picture secured for him the patronage of the academy, at whose expense he was sent to Italy, to pursue his studies in the famous galleries of Rome and Florence.

He returned with a mind imbued with the beauty and majesty of the works of those great masters, whose glory will outlive the canvas and marble which achieved it, determined to win for himself a niche in the temple of Fame, or perish in his laborious efforts to obtain it.

At this time he was in his twenty-second year. A vigorous constitution was his heritage, and his rounded cheek glowed with the warm colour of health.

His strictly classical features were enhanced by the luxuriance of his hair, which he wore flowing in native curls, while his full beard and moustache relieved his face from the charge of effeminacy.

Ernest was yet engaged in the contemplation of the unfinished work—or rather in dreaming of the bright original—when a light tap was heard at his door.

He opened it eagerly, and his poor studio was suddenly illuminated, as it were, by the radiant apparition of Rose d'Amour.

She was dressed with a charming simplicity, which well became a sylph-like form that required no adventitious aid from art.

"Good morning, Monsieur Lavalle!" said the beau-

tiful actress, cheerfully, as she dropped gracefully into the *fauve* prepared for reception. "You find me in the best possible humour to-day, thanks to this bright morning sun, and to the success of last night. *Mon Dieu!*—so many bouquets! you can't think! Really the life of an artist begins to be quite amusing. Don't you find it so as a painter?"

"I confess to you, mademoiselle, I have my moments of despondency."

"With your fine talent? Think better of yourself. I hope at least that I have not been so unlucky as to surprise you in one of those inopportune moments."

"Ah! mademoiselle," said the painter, "if it were so, one of your smiles would dispel the cloud in a moment."

"Really!" replied the actress, gaily. "Are you quite sure there is no flattery in the remark? I am aware that flattery is an essential part of an artist's profession."

"Not of a true artist's," replied Ernest. "The aim and end of all art is truth; and he who forgets it is untrue to his high mission."

"True," said the lady. "Well, then, *faites autre chose*—as Napoleon said to his friend David—for I am anxious that this portrait shall be a *chef-d'œuvre*. I design it for a present."

"With such a subject before me," replied the painter, "I could not labour more conscientiously, if the picture were designed for myself."

The sitting passed away rapidly for the artist; and he was surprised when the lady, after consulting her watch, rose hastily, and exclaimed:

"That odious rehearsal! I must leave you—but you ought to be satisfied, for I have given you two hours of my valuable time. Adieu, then, until tomorrow."

With a smile that seemed natural to her, the beautiful girl vanished, taking with her half the sunshine of the room.

The painter continued his labour of love. Indeed, so absorbed was he in his employment, that he did not notice the entrance of a visitor, until he felt a light tap on the shoulder, accompanied by these words:

"Bravo, mon cher! You are getting on famously. That is Rose herself—as radiant as she appears on the stage, when the focus of a *lorgnette* has excluded all the stupid and *ennuyeuses* figures that surround her."

The speaker was Sir Frederick Stanley, now some months in Paris, where he had plunged into all the gaities of the season. He was a handsome man of middle age, whose features bore the impress of dissipation.

"You know the original, then?" asked the painter, somewhat coldly.

"Know her! My dear fellow, I don't know anybody else. Why, I have the entry of the *Gaieté*, and pass all my evenings behind the scenes. I flatter myself—but no matter. I have taken a fancy to that picture—what do you say to a hundred guineas for it?"

"It is not for sale," said the painter.

"You have succeeded so well, you wish to keep it for yourself—eh? Double the price, and let me have it."

"Impossible, Sir Frederick. It is painted for Ma'amelle d'Amour herself, and she designs it for a present."

"Say no more," said the baronet, with a self-satisfied smile. "I think I could name the happy individual."

Ernest would not gratify his visitor by a question, and the latter, finding the artist reserved and *distract*, suddenly recollects the races at Chantilly, and took his leave.

"Can it be possible," thought the painter, "that Rose has suffered her affections to repose on that conceited, purse-proud, elderly man? Oh, woman, woman!—how readily you barter the wealth of your heart for a handful of gold!"

Another tap at the door—another visitor! Really, Lavalle must be getting famous! This time it is a lady—a lady of surpassing loveliness—one of those well-preserved women, who at forty are as attractive as at twenty. This lady was tall and stately, with elegant manners, and perhaps a thought of sadness in her expression. She gazed long and earnestly upon the portrait of Rose d'Amour.

"It is a beautiful face!" she said, at length; "and one that indicates, I should think, much goodness of heart."

"She is an angel!" said the painter.

"You speak warmly, sir," said the lady with a sad smile.

Ernest blushed, for he feared that he had betrayed his secret. The lady did not appear to notice his embarrassment, and passed to the occasion of her visit, which was to engage the young artist to paint her portrait—a task which he readily undertook, for he was pleased with and interested in his fair patroness. The picture was immediately commenced, and an hour fixed for a second sitting on the next day. It

was on that occasion that the fair unknown encountered the actress, and they retired in company.

The two portraits were finished at the same time, and reflected the greatest credit on the artist. They were varnished, framed, and paid for, but the painter had received no orders for their final disposition, when one morning, he was waited on by the two ladies, who informed him that they should call upon him the following day, when the two portraits would be presented in his study to the persons for whom they were designed.

The artist was enjoined to place them on two separate easels—that of the actress to stand nearest the door of the studio, and both to be concealed by a curtain until the ladies should give the signal for their exposure.

The portrait of the English lady, we will here remark, had by her request, been hitherto seen only by the artist.

There was a mystery in this arrangement which piqued excessively the curiosity of the painter, and he was anxious to witness the *dénouement*.

The next day at eleven o'clock everything was in readiness, and the painter awaited the solution of the mystery.

The first person who presented himself was Sir Frederick Stanley; he was very radiant.

"Congratulate me, mon cher!" said he. "Read that."

Ernest took an open note from his hand, and read as follows:—

"Be at the studio of Ernest Lavalle to-morrow at eleven. You will there receive a present, which, if there be any truth in man's vows, will certainly delight you."

The astonishment and disappointment of Ernest was at its height, when the door opened, and the actress entered, followed by a female closely veiled.

"You are true to your appointment, Sir Frederick," said the actress, gaily, "and your punctuality shall be rewarded."

She advanced to the further easel, and lifting the curtain, disclosed the features of the English lady.

"This is for you," she said, laughing.

"My wife, by all that's wonderful!" exclaimed the baronet.

"Accompanied by the original!" said Lady Stanley, as she unveiled and advanced. "Sir Frederick, Sir Frederick! when you were amusing yourself by paying unmeaning attentions to this young lady, I am afraid you forgot to tell her you had a wife in England."

"I thought it unnecessary," stammered the baronet.

"How could you disturb the peace of mind of a young girl, when you knew you could not requite her affection?" continued Lady Stanley.

"It was only a flirtation, to pass away the time," said Sir Frederick, "but I acknowledge it was culpable. My dear Emmeline, I thank you for your present. I shall ever cherish it as my dearest possession—next to yourself."

"For you, sir," said the beautiful actress, turning to Ernest, "I cannot think of depriving you of your best effort. Take the portrait. I wish the subject was worthier."

And she withdrew the curtain from her picture.

"I am ungrateful," said Ernest, in a low and tremulous tone. "Much as I prize the picture, I can never be happy without the original."

"Is it so?" replied the actress, in the same low tone of emotion.

Then, placing her hand timidly in his, she added:

"The original is yours!"

Sir Frederick and Lady Stanley claimed the privilege of witnessing the nuptials of Ernest and Rose, whose wedded life commenced under the happiest auspices.

F. A. D.

weapons of every description, pouring forth volumes of blood with every fresh wound, with the energy of despair lashing the mud water with their huge tails, and burying their enormous heads with agony in the ground. The work of destruction continued until a late hour in the morning, when no less than thirty-six were found to have been killed in this way, some of the fish as large as 26 feet, and one no less than 28 feet long, but by far the greater number being from 15 to 18 feet. The total number captured, including those on the other parts of the Firth and on the coast, is estimated at between fifty and sixty, and it is confidently asserted that few, if any, of the shoal succeeded in making their escape. It is some six years since there was a capture of whales in this quarter before.

A very great curiosity has lately been added to Berkeley Castle, namely, a "monster" Chinese bell. It has been raised upon a very ornamental iron frame in the outer court of this stronghold of the Berkeley family. Upon a small brass tablet the following inscription appears: "This bell was presented by Captain Roderick Dew, C.B., of H.M.S. Endeavour, to his kind friend and patron, Admiral the Right Hon. Lord Fitzhardinge, G.C.B., under whose auspices he entered the Navy, served under his command in H.M. ships Hercules and Thunderer. It was brought from the ruins of a Buddhist temple at Tsekee, in China, which had been burnt by the Taepings, December, 1864."

EVA ASHLEY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FIRST INTERVIEW BETWEEN MRS. WILDE AND SQUIRE ASHLEY.

WHEN Mrs. Wilde reached Ashurst, she found the eastern wing of the old house prepared for the reception of herself and her young charge. The suite consisted of two medium-sized rooms, with a small dressing-closet attached to them.

One of these was fitted up as a sitting-room for herself, and the other as a nursery for the infant heiress.

A young girl was placed under her to wait upon herself and the child, for Hunter had insisted that she was to be considered on the footing of governess to the little girl, and be treated as such.

In the exultation of her heart, the fond mother forgot at what a sacrifice of principle all this had been obtained; she could only look upon the grand old woods, the stately home, and the evidences of wealth everywhere around her, and rejoice that by her own cleverness all these had been secured to her own daughter, without material injury to the defrauded heiress.

In the first flush of success, she had no remorse for what she had done, though she was not so much hardened as to be incapable of feeling it.

Mrs. Wilde had many good impulses, but no firm principle; but as time rolled on, and the necessity for concealing her fraud became more urgent, her nature must harden to the task of supporting the imposition she had thus far found so easy.

Her meals were served in her own apartment with a degree of dainty elegance to which she had not been accustomed, and for a season the change in her condition, from extreme poverty to luxurious indulgence, was sufficient enjoyment for one of her temperament.

Besides, she had a passionate love for her child, and many hours of the day were spent in playing with and fondling the lovely little creature.

But the extreme loneliness of her life gradually began to make itself felt, and one evening she impatiently asked Winny, the servant girl, if Squire Ashley never intended to visit his grandchild or speak with her attendant about her.

To this inquiry the servant replied:

"Master don't see nobody, Mrs. Wilde. Since Master Leon died he stays mostly in his own room, and when he comes out it's only to walk by himself in the woods. You may stay here a year before he'll come near you to speak to you. He asks every day if the child is well, and as long as she is so he'll not trouble himself to look after her."

"What a hard-hearted old man! he must be! I declare it is a shame that he has not yet looked on the innocent face of his grand-daughter, and she has been in this house two months. How did his son come to die so young? I live here surrounded by mysteries I cannot penetrate, and I am tired to death of trying to find a solution of them. If this poor child is the daughter of a woman Squire Ashley's son clandestinely married, that is no reason why she should be treated as an interloper in his house. He has never asked to have her taken to him once, and I am surprised and shocked at his indifference."

Winnie regarded the speaker with dilating eyes: she seemed lost in astonishment that anyone should presume to disapprove of what her master did; after a pause she said:

"We all obeys master. He always does just as he pleases, and what for shouldn't he when he's rich?"

"But I don't intend to be treated so. I am determined to speak with Squire Ashley before another day goes by. Do you suppose that I can live here without having a soul to come near me?"

"I don't know, ma'am. But my master don't think nothing about them things. He's had too much trouble about his children turning out the way they has to think much about other people's feelings."

"Children! Had Squire Ashley more than one child?" asked the nurse, in an excited manner.

"I thought everybody know'd that. Miss Ellinor and Master Leon both went the same road. They

EXTRAORDINARY CAPTURE OF WHALES IN THE CROMARTY FIRTH.—Early one afternoon a large shoal of bottle-nosed whales was observed in the water about half a mile distant from Invergordon Harbour, and were immediately pursued by boats from Invergordon, Saltburn, Ballintraid, and the coast, the object of the pursuers being to run them into shallow water and strand them. The pursuers succeeded in keeping the fish ahead of them, and arrived at Nonar Bay about eight o'clock, where a number were captured. Night did not stop the operations of those who had engaged in the pursuit, and shortly after twelve o'clock, and early in the morning, those of the shoal which had managed to get so far along the coast grounded among the mud and sand opposite Dingwall. It was now that the work began in right earnest. A number of the townspeople were prepared for what was likely to happen, and hastened to the scene. A general massacre ensued, and it was said to be a piteous spectacle to witness the poor creatures, attacked on all sides by

A young Spaniard, Argemeda by name, who told me he had been seized by Paillacan on returning with some Indians to Chili from the settlement of Carmen, and was kept to wait upon him and his wives, brought me some horseflesh for my supper, and afterwards gave me half his bed—a dry hide covered with sheep-skin. He said it was fortunate for me that I had found the cacique alone, his people being out on a hunting excursion beyond the River Negro; had they been at home, he said, I should have had them all to deal with and to satisfy.—*Cox's Expedition across the Southern Andes of Chili.*

both married without asking master's leave, to some poor trash; and he never forgave neither of them."

"And where is Miss Ellinor now, and whom did she marry?"

"She met a Mr. Wentworth at Torquay, where they were staying, I heard them say, and when her father found out what was going on, he stormed at her, and told her to pack up her things to come along home with him. But she just went the other way, and got married out of hand to her lover what hadn't got a shilling to bless himself with, and a nice time they had of it afterwards."

"And has her father never forgiven her?" asked Mrs. Wilde.

"Forgive her! Master don't know what that means. He's as proud as Lucifer, and when he's set his foot down once, he never takes it up again on that affair, you may be sure."

Winny shook her head ominously, and looked squarely into the face of the interested listener.

"And where is Mrs. Wentworth now?"

"The Lord above knows, but I don't. Miss Ellinor's never been here since she went away as gay as a lark and as pretty as a rose. The news came the very next year that her husband had been killed accidentally, and we all thought she would be sent for, then, sure, but she wasn't. She came to the Jolly Angler, the tavern not very far off from here, and sent for her pa to go and see her; but he wouldn't do no such thing, neither would he listen to any of her excuses for going off and leaving him, and he swore a great oath that her little boy should never grow up to have any of his money!"

"And what became of the poor lady and her son?"

"She went away, and nobody knows what's come of her. It's just five years since Miss Ellinor come back to the old place, and was sent adrift again."

"What a stony-hearted old man Squire Ashley must be!" muttered the listener. "What I have done seems to be retributive justice for his harshness to his daughter. Oh! if he were to discover it, what dreadful punishment would he deem fitting for me! But I am safe—safe! He can never fathom the deception I have practised upon him."

After a few moments' reflection, she turned to a table, opened her portfolio, and wrote the following lines :

"SQUIRE ASHLEY:—I shall be very glad to see you face to face for a few moments, that I may give you a faithful account of the care I take of your granddaughter."

"Though I accepted the situation of nurse to little Evelyn under the pressure of extreme distress, I am a woman of respectable antecedents and good education; and I was not prepared to be treated as a menial on my arrival here."

"The strong attachment I have formed for my infant charge will lead me to bear much for her sake; but when I tell you that I pine for the sound of a cultivated voice, you will understand the desolate state of my feelings."

"Accord to me only a brief interview, I intreat, and I pledge myself not to trespass on your time or patience."

Respectfully,

"MARGARET WILDE."

She folded and directed this note, and commanded Winney to take it at once to her master.

She felt a feverish anxiety to see him and judge of this man herself, for she felt that her future fate depended on the influence she could gain over him by the exercise of such wiles as she well knew how to use.

Mrs. Wilde felt that she must risk everything to establish some sort of intercourse between her employer and herself, which she could turn to account as opportunity offered.

Winny took the note and received her command, with an expression of astonishment that was almost ludicrous.

That anyone should dare to risk the displeasure of her master was inconceivable to her, but she went off at once to perform her errand.

In half-an-hour she returned with the following reply:

"Mrs. WILDE—MADAM:—I regret to learn that you are not satisfied with the reception you have met with in my house."

"I ordered everything essential to your comfort and that of the infant, to be placed at your command, and if you will recall the terms of our agreement, you will see how unreasonable is your present demand."

"I distinctly stated that the child was not to be obstructed on my notice, and, of course, her nurse should have understood that the prohibition applied equally to herself."

"I do not require any report of the little girl's progress. If she is sick, summon the doctor; but unless she is in a dying condition, I shall not come to her. I tolerate her presence beneath my roof, but that is all I will do for the present."

"At her age, it is impossible that she could possess

any interest for me, though in time to come she may assume some importance in my eyes as the heiress of my name and fortune."

"I shall be sorry to have you go away, but if you are so much dissatisfied with the seclusion in which you live, I suppose you will decide to do so."

"In that event I must confide the child to one of my own women, and when she is old enough to be sent from home, place her in a boarding-school."

"I understand from my lawyer that you had agreed to remain here an indefinite time as governess to the child, and I can only regret that you have such a distaste for the solitude in which you must inevitably live, as to lead you to give up a luxurious and secure asylum for the hardships to which you will be exposed in the outside world."

"I am not in a state of mind to see anyone, so you really must excuse me for not granting your request."

"Respectfully,

"R. ASHLEY."

Mrs. Wilde read over this letter several times with vivid interest, for it seemed to her to furnish a clue to the character of its writer.

Firm, yet perfectly courteous, she saw that its author was a gentleman, though a man of arbitrary will and strong feeling.

She did not reply to it till the following morning.

She then wrote :

"SQUIRE ASHLEY—SIR:—I have taken a night to reflect on my position here, and I have come to the conclusion that I cannot bear to give up my nursing."

"After what you have said, I will not presume to urge you to see her, though if you could be prevailed on to look upon her sweet face but once, you would be so fascinated by her charms that you would ask to see her every day."

"Evelyn Ashley is a rare little creature, as you would acknowledge if you would only let her smile in your face, and twist her baby fingers in your hair."

"Respectfully,

"M. WILDE."

To this a curt reply speedily came :

"I SHALL NOT SEE HER, NOR YOURSELF, THOUGH I AM GLAD YOU HAVE HAD SENSE ENOUGH TO SEE WHERE YOUR TRUE INTERESTS LIE."

"Who called the child Evelyn? I do not approve the name, and I command it to be changed forthwith. Call her Elizabeth—that was my mother's name, and I know she was a good woman."

"DO NOT WRITE TO ME AGAIN, AS I AM IN NO MOOD TO ANSWER LETTERS."

R. A."

After this there was no further pretext for communicating with him, and as the weeks passed on, the tedium of Mrs. Wilde's life became almost insupportable.

She had not much fondness for reading, and the books placed in her apartment were not suited to her taste; but one morning a package of novels and magazines was brought in, with Squire Ashley's compliments, and a message to the effect that when these were exhausted, she would have the liberty of visiting his library, and selecting such volumes as she desired to read.

This was something gained, she thought.

She could visit the opposite wing of the house, and penetrate into at least one of the apartments appropriated to the use of her host, and she resolved that the permission should not be used without bringing forth some result to further the ambitious project she began to entertain.

Mrs. Wilde persuaded herself that it was necessary to the future security of her daughter that she should gain a permanent footing at Ashurst.

Without it, she also risked a future separation from her darling, and she was ready to do anything that would secure herself against such a contingency.

She looked into her mirror, and saw there a singularly attractive face, with a form rounded in the soft curves of youth and health; she thought of her twenty years of life, of the snow of sixty winters that lay upon the temples of Squire Ashley, and with time and opportunity she did not despair of melting the ice of pride and dignity which held him aloof from her, even to the point of inducing him to dream of happiness with a young wife—of eventually placing herself in that position.

With such visions floating before her fancy, Mrs. Wilde hastened to read the books which had been sent, that she might have an excuse for visiting the library.

At the close of the week she dressed herself with extreme care, and taking in her hand the books which had been sent to her, she walked slowly toward the eastern wing of the house, and entered the lofty room which Winny had pointed out to her as the one where the "book" was to be found.

The windows opened to the floor, and a flight of steps led up to a glass door, through which she entered, and glanced curiously around.

She saw that the room communicated with the narrow vestibule before described, and wondering if

Squire Ashley was in his own apartment, she flitted from case to case, selecting such mental food as she fancied.

Mrs. Wilde suddenly became conscious that some one was standing behind the shelter of the half-open door, watching her movements.

It could be no other than Squire Ashley, and she felt a little resentful as she thought that this was the first glimpse she had had of him in the three months she had resided beneath his roof.

But she was very careful not to betray her feelings, or to make him aware that she knew he was furtively watching her.

With instinctive coquetry she remembered that she was looking remarkably pretty that evening, and she trusted that he would find sufficient interest in her appearance to induce him to speak to her.

Nor was she mistaken.

Pleased with her acquiescence in the decision that they were to remain aloof from each other, Squire Ashley insensibly began to think more of this lovely young creature than was quite consistent with the gravity of his years, and the deep affliction from which he was beginning to recover.

The oppressive melancholy which had so long lain as an incubus upon him was re-acting, and he keenly felt the need of some kind of intelligent companion.

But where should he seek it, was the question he most frequently asked himself?

Since the humiliation brought on him by the conduct of his son, he had shrunk from mingling with those who knew what a sad downfall his pride of family had met with, and desirous as he was of communion with his kind, he still morbidly recoiled from calling his own associates around him.

In this dilemma, there seemed no resource left him but to seek the society of the solitary woman who had expressed the same need of social intercourse in the letter written so many weeks ago.

At that time Squire Ashley thought it impossible that he should ever again tolerate the presence of a stranger near him.

Misanthropy possessed him, and while he suffered so keenly the whole world was odious in his sight.

But now the suffering had partially exhausted itself, and his desolate heart yearned for human sympathy.

He did not acknowledge to himself that it would be peculiarly acceptable from a young and fair woman, but it must be told that his desire to make the acquaintance of Mrs. Wilde had been much quickened by a casual glimpse of her in the grounds, where she sat one bright day in the shadow of a large tree, engaged in a hearty romp with the baby.

He had paused where he could not be seen, and he listened with amused surprise to the soft nonsense that fell from her lips, witnessed the passionate caresses she lavished on the child, and he caught himself sighing as he thought:

"What a capacity for loving that woman has! The infant is not her own, yet she seems more devoted to it than most mothers are to their own offspring!"

Squire Ashley was interested in the nurse, and from that moment he determined to change his tactics toward her: so he sent her the books, and the permission to visit the library, intending to watch for her visit there, and come into the room as if by accident.

How little was he aware that the astute brain packed away under those charming braids was perfectly aware of his tactics, from the moment she detected him watching her through the door.

"I CAN OUT-MAUCOURT HIM," she thought; "and with patience and perseverance I shall yet win the day, in spite of his pride."

Mrs. Wilde heard a step behind her, but she pretended to be absorbed in the contents of a book she had taken down, and she did not look around till the voice of the squire spoke close beside her.

"I HOPE YOU HAVE FOUND SOMETHING ADAPTED TO YOUR TASTE, MRS. WILDE. YOU SEEM TO BE DEEPLY INTERESTED."

With a most natural start and a slight increase of colour which heightened the piquant attraction of her expressive face, with perfect self-possession she made a graceful obeisance, and said :

"I HAVE AT LAST THE PLEASURE SO LONG DESIRED OF SPEAKING TO SQUIRE ASHLEY. I THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR, FOR THE PERMISSION GRANTED ME TO AVAIL MYSELF OF THE TREASURES OF YOUR LIBRARY. I HAVE FOUND MUCH IN IT THAT I HAVE LONG DESIRED TO READ."

The squire seemed struck by her courteous ease and the propriety with which she expressed herself.

He half smiled as he replied :

"I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY FOR NOT OFFERING YOU THE USE OF MY BOOKS ON YOUR FIRST ARRIVAL AT ASHURST; BUT TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH I HAD ACCUSTOMED MYSELF TO THINK OF YOU ONLY AS LITTLE BESSIE'S NURSE, AND NOT AS WHAT YOU PROVED YOURSELF TO BE IN THE FIRST NOTE YOU ADDRESSED TO ME—A WOMAN OF EDUCATION AND REFINEMENT. PARDON ME THAT MY SELF-ABSORPTION AT THAT TIME RENDERED ME THOUGHTLESS OF OTHERS. FOR MONTHS PAST I HAVE BEEN



[THE FIRST INTERVIEW BETWEEN MRS. WILDE AND SQUIRE ASHLEY.]

as one walking in the valley of humiliation and desolation; only of late have I begun to feel that I am still human—still have social needs which must be ministered to."

With an arch smile Mrs. Wilde asked:

"May I consider that as a confession that you were too hard on me in the harsh note which ended our correspondence? I then gave up all hope of making your acquaintance, and pardon me in my turn, if I add that it quenched nearly all desire to do so."

"It was a natural feeling," frankly replied the squire. "You had every reason to think me a bear and to shrink from meeting me. I do not offer any excuse for writing that note, Mrs. Wilde, but, in the future, I will endeavour to atone for any want of consideration implied in its contents. In the nurse chosen for my grandchild I expected to find a healthy woman, with no particular recommendation beyond that; and I am much surprised to find in that position a lady whose manners and appearance would adorn any circle."

Mrs. Wilde smiled brightly at this compliment; but she replied with a slight curl of her ruby lip:

"I will be frank with you, sir, and give you an outline of my sad history."

"My father was captain and part owner of a merchant ship which traded from a northern port to Liverpool. He was lost at sea with one who was even nearer and dearer to me, and I found myself thrown helpless and penniless upon the world. I had been the wife of Frank Wilde, my father's first mate, but a month, when he left me for the fatal voyage in which both father and husband perished."

"By some informality in the insurance on the ship, I lost it all, and after spending almost my last penny in endeavouring to recover it, I took refuge with a distant connection of my father, a man in very humble circumstances; and it was there the offer to take charge of your grand-daughter was sent to me, when I had become almost hopeless of finding anything that I could do to gain a living. I gladly accepted it, and now I love the child as if she were my own."

"And what did you do with your own infant?" asked the squire. "I am sorry now that it should not be brought here."

A change passed over her face. A slight pallor overspread it, and there was a sudden catching of the breath which touched the old man and prepared him for the answer which slowly came:

"I lost her, sir; the little child was taken from me; but I am more fortunate than most mothers who have been thus bereaved, in having so lovely a nursing-servant sent me in place of the one that is gone."

Her voice quivered as she uttered this equivocation, and Squire Ashley pointed to a chair and said:

"I have already kept you standing too long, Mrs. Wilde. Pray excuse me; a lady, however reduced in circumstances, is always entitled to the consideration of every man of feeling. I assure you that I have the deepest sympathy for you, and can comprehend how your pride must have shrunk from filling the position to which misfortune has reduced you."

With infinite grace she lifted his hand to her rosy lips and softly said:

"How shall I thank you for such sympathy, sir? It is worthy of yourself; but do not suppose that I have suffered the pangs which one of your proud race would be entitled to feel under such a change of fortune. My family is only respectable; it has no high name—no lofty antecedents to look back upon and make my descent in the scale of social life as bitter as they would be to one of your proud blood. I felt the pangs of poverty more than those of pride, I am afraid."

The touch of her glowing fingers sent a thrill through the heart of the old man which disposed him to listen kindly to the artful speech that followed.

Like his son, he had a weakness for young and pretty women, and at that moment he felt like Jove stooping from the summit of Olympus to pluck an humble floweret and place it in his lofty abode. He patronizingly replied:

"It affords me great pleasure madam to be able to assist you to regain the position to which you were born. Henceforth, I shall consider you only in the light of my grand-daughter's governess, and entitled to the consideration in my family which that position will give you. I will order the mother of Winnie to take the place of under-nurse and the girl herself can act as your personal attendant."

The sweet clear laugh of Mrs. Wilde rang out as she presently said:

"My dear sir, I hope you do not fancy that I am above attending to the duties for which I am paid. Excuse me, but if I remain in your house at all it must be as the *bona fide* nurse of Bessie. Besides, I love the child to that degree that I should be miserable if any one else had such care of her as to win from me her first smiles—the first emotion of love in her little heart."

She spoke so earnestly now there was such passionate emotion in her voice that her companion was touched; he said:

"You seem to make an idol of this little one, Mrs. Wilde. Creditable as it is to you, I must still feel surprise that the child of strangers should have awakened such strong feelings in your heart."

"Oh, sir," she replied, with emotion, "Bessie came to me when I was desolate and almost broken-hearted. She took the place of those I had loved and lost, and it is not wonderful that she is dear to me as if—as if she were my own."

The last words were uttered in a hesitating tremulous voice, and the squire smiled as he replied:

"So much the better for her, if she has been fortunate enough to reach the true maternal heart. I must see this fascinating little gipsy, and, with your permission I will have her brought to my room in the morning."

"Certainly, sir; you have only to express a wish to have it gratified."

"Of course she has the Ashley mark," he asked. "If she has not the black mole below her elbow, which belongs to my family, I will scarcely believe her to be a daughter of my race."

"Oh yes, the mark of your family is upon her," replied Mrs. Wilde, with a brilliant smile, which showed an even row of pearly and faultless teeth. "You will be charmed with your grandchild, Squire Ashley, for she is the loveliest infant I have ever seen. But I beg that will you excuse me now; my baby may be fretting for me by this time, and pleasant as I find it to talk with you, I must go back to my duties."

He bowed, lifted the books she seemed about to forget, and offered them to her, as he replied:

"Whenever you wish to renew the conversation which I have found so agreeable, you have only to come to the library, make your presence here known to me, and I will join you. A man of my years and character may speak with a lady youthful enough to be his grand-daughter, without causing invidious comment; even if there was any one to gossip about it. But there is not, for my servants know better than to meddle with what concerns me."

She demurely replied:

"Thank you, sir, for the great compliment you have paid me in wishing to see me again. When I feel the need of speaking with one who can understand and appreciate me, I must perchance come hither; but I promise not to trespass upon you too often."

In his heart the squire thought that he could never find the visits of so fascinating a creature intrusive, but he only bowed, and suffered her to pass out.

When Mrs. Wilde reached the yard, she cast back a nod and smile to the grey-haired man, who stood at the window watching her, which positively dazzled him; then, certain of its effect, she tripped away in the direction of the nursery.

(To be continued.)



[MR. GOSS BELIEVES IN GHOSTS.]

SIR JOHN.

By MRS. LEON LEWIS.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

He knew himself a villain, but he deemed
The rest no better than the thing he seemed.

Byron.

As their comrades announced the return of their chief by tumultuous cries and cheers, the brigands who had collected in Sir John's cell returned to the outer cave. Annetti and the Frenchmen alone remaining with the baronet.

"Barbi is telling the captain now about your strange recovery," said the woman, standing in the doorway between the two caves. "Your fate will soon be decided, Signor Inglesi. Perhaps the captain will fix your ransom this very day."

Sir John was thoughtful and silent.

Half an hour passed, while interrogatories were exchanged between Il Diavolo and his men and questions answered; but at length Annetti announced that the captain had proceeded to his chamber.

In a few minutes more, one of the brigands appeared in the doorway, stating that his chief desired to see the Inglesi without delay.

The Frenchmen clasped the baronet's hands as he arose to obey the summons, and expressed a hope that the interview would result favourably to him, and he then bade the guide lead the way.

He was conducted through the outer cavern—where the whole band regarded him curiously, his sudden recovery looking to them like a miracle—to the farther end of the cavern, where a narrow passage branched off. This passage conducted to a spacious cave, which seemed to have a second outlet.

In order to make the captain's apartment as quiet and retired as possible, a door had been fitted, and furnished with a lock and key. This door was now a little ajar, and a hanging of heavy cloth could be seen inside, shutting out any view of the apartment.

After giving the baronet a few directions, the guide retreated to the outer cave.

Sir John advanced, lifted the cloth, and found himself in a large and neatly furnished apartment, where books, musical instruments, and other evidences of refined taste abounded.

The only occupant of this chamber was Il Diavolo himself.

He was reclining on a lounge when the baronet entered, but he arose, greeted him by an inclination of the head, and the two men then surveyed each other with considerable curiosity.

The robber chief was about thirty years of age, tall and slender, and with a countenance which once seen could not easily have been forgotten. His hair and eyes were as black as jet, while his complexion seemed to have been originally florid, but was now burned to a deep bronze colour. He wore a heavy moustache, the long ends of which were curled, and a long forked beard, which had a strange effect.

His dress, which had evidently just been changed, was extremely jaunty and picturesque, and was composed of black velvet trimmed with a profusion of gold cord and gold lace.

This personage regarded Sir John with considerable curiosity, the clear, keen eyes, the anxious face, and the dignified carriage of the baronet presenting a strange contrast to his late listlessness and melancholy.

"You wished to see me?" said Sir John, in Italian.

"I sent for you," responded the brigand, in English. "Sit down, sir. You do not look much now as you did the last time I saw you! So your year of captivity here has been like a dream to you?"

"No, not like a dream," said the baronet, taking a seat. "I have not the faintest recollection of a single incident. In fact, I can hardly persuade myself that I have not been taken captive to-day!"

"Strange!"

Sir John looked at the brigand with renewed interest—it seemed so strange that he should be speaking English, and with so little accent.

"I have questioned you several times during your stay with us," remarked the chief, "but could not elicit a word from you. You had even forgotten your name. You came to ransom a prisoner. Was he your relative?"

"He was."

"Who are you?"

"First tell me—is he really dead?" questioned the baronet. "I would cling to hope as long as possible!"

"He is really dead."

"You are sure?"

"As sure as that you live! After your treachery, Barbi, who was with the man, I being absent, gave the order to fire, and your relative fell dead! There can be no doubt about it. A bullet found its way to his brain. You may consider yourself fortunate that your treachery was not punished by your own death!"

"But I did not betray you!" declared Sir John.

"I knew no more of the coming of those soldiers than yourself! I acted in good faith throughout."

No one was more surprised than myself when they appeared!"

The brigand regarded Sir John searchingly.

"Do you speak truth?" he demanded.

"I do. I repeat that I was as much surprised as were your men at the coming of the soldiers."

The firm tones, and the clear gaze that met unflinchingly the keen scrutiny of the brigand, produced a strong effect upon the latter.

"Can Barbi and the men have been mistaken?" he muttered.

He was thoughtful a moment, and then remarked:

"I have spared your life during your illness, on account of the interest taken in you by Annetti, Barbi's wife! Although the men were anxious to put you to death for your supposed treachery, the woman's counsels prevailed. But it has always been understood that, should you recover your senses, your life was to be paid a forfeit. I find it hard to doubt your word, having had great experience in reading faces, and think it probable that I shall hold you for ransom. You may, therefore, consider your life as safe, provided the proposed demand for your ransom meets with prompt payment!"

The baronet bewed.

"As a preliminary to business," resumed the brigand, "you will tell me your name and station!"

The baronet hesitated.

A moment's reflection, however, convinced him that frankness was the best course he could adopt, and he replied:

"I am Sir John Courtney, Baronet, of Courtney Hall—"

The brigand started.

"Sir John Courtney!" he repeated. "Is it possible? The wealthy baronet? And Colonel Courtney, whom you came to ransom, was your brother?"

"He was!" replied the baronet, wondering at the brigand's strange agitation.

"How strange! Why did I not suspect it?" muttered the chief, arising and pacing to and fro. "Yet how could I? Colonel Courtney never mentioned that his brother was a baronet, and I did not see the address on the letter he despatched!"

"You have heard of me then before?" inquired Sir John, in astonishment.

"Often, sir, often! In truth, I regard you as a relative!"

The baronet began to think that his companion was taking leave of his senses.

"Regard me as a relative!" he exclaimed. "An English baronet the relative of an Italian brigand!"

"Even so," responded Il Diavolo, with a strange smile. "Oh, if I had only suspected the identity of Colonel Courtney! He might have been living now! But he was so reserved, so determined to reveal nothing of his circumstances!"

The brigand seemed to feel a keen regret as he said this, and after a pause continued:

"Have no fears of me, Sir John. We will arrange the affair of your ransom after a little conversation. Will you be kind enough to talk to me of yourself, your family, your relatives?"

This singular demand quite puzzled the baronet, who replied, however, somewhat haughtily:

"I do not care to speak of my family in this place. You are probably mistaken in me—thinking me to be some one else. I know of no other Sir John Courtney?"

"You are the gentleman!" interrupted the brigand, with singular earnestness. "Have you not a son in Germany, named Ralph?"

"I did have. Did you know him?"

"No. I never saw him. But I know a great deal about the Courtney family, which I have gathered from different sources."

The baronet was surprised, and concluding, since the brigand seemed to know so much about him already, that reserve was useless, he said:

"Very well. I am ready to tell you about my family. It is very small, consisting of my son and an adopted daughter. Do you wish to inquire about either?"

"An adopted daughter?" repeated the brigand, thoughtfully. "How old is she? What is her name?"

"She is about seventeen now, and her name is Amher Courtney," replied Sir John, with emotion.

The brigand looked disappointed.

"And that is all the family you have?" he asked.

"Yes, all!"

"You are sure you have no visitors—no relatives living with you—"

"Yes, I have visitors," responded the baronet. "I have two cousins—brother and sister—living with me!"

The brigand's features lighted up with sudden interest.

"Tell me of your cousin," he said; "the lady!"

Wondering more and more at the strange mystery of the bandit's behaviour, Sir John said:

"She is named Blanche Longley—"

The brigand uttered a strange cry.

"Blanche Longley!" he said, hoarsely. "Blanche Longley! She is at your house then?"

The baronet mastered his astonishment sufficiently to reply in the affirmative.

"That is," he explained, "she was when I left home, and I presume she remains there still, as she intended to become a permanent member of my family!"

"And you could have told me all this a year ago, if you had had your senses!" murmured the chief, regretfully. "If I had only known it! Is Blanche as beautiful as she used to be?"

"Yes, she is very lovely. But what can one so dark and terrible as Il Diavolo, the brigand-chief, know of Blanche Longley?"

The brigand smiled strangely.

"She is very secluded at your home?" he said, evasively.

"Quite so, although we have neighbours with whom we visit often."

"Your son is at home?"

"To the best of my belief—yes!"

The brigand frowned.

"I do not like that!" he observed, as if musing.

"And yet—and yet—"

His voice became inaudible as his thoughtfulness became deeper.

"Your conduct is very mysterious," finally remarked the baronet. "You quite bewilder me by asking so many questions about my family, and seeming to know its members so well. Have you ever seen Blanche Longley?"

The brigand smiled, as he replied in the affirmative.

"What can Blanche Longley, one of the purest and most saintly of women, have in common with a man like you? Where have you seen her?"

The brigand crossed the floor several times with a thoughtful air, as if pondering whether to confide in his prisoner or not, but he finally seated himself near the baronet, and said:

"You have never heard Blanche speak of me?"

"Never!"

"It's a singular story—our acquaintance," remarked the chief. "No wonder you are surprised to learn that one so lovely as Blanche should have anything in common with me. I will explain to you the whole secret. Listen!"

The baronet controlled his surprise and prepared to give his whole attention to the promised confidence.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

I cannot keep
A secret to myself, but thy prevailing
Rhetoric ravishes and leaves my breast
Like to an empty casket, that once was blest
With keeping of a jewel I durst not trust
The air with, 'twas so precious.

Rawlinson.

The brigand became silent and thoughtful, as if forgetting his proposed communication, and Sir John began to fear that his curiosity was doomed to remain unsatisfied, but at length Il Diavolo remarked:

"Before revealing to you the great mystery of my life, it may be well to explain to you who and what I really am. The secret will remain safe with you, I am sure, for reasons which you will soon discover. I am by birth an Englishman. My father was English, my mother Italian. My name is Clonville—"

"I have heard that name before!" interrupted Sir John, involuntarily.

"You have. My mother possessed a haughty, unbending spirit, and my father was much like her. Their married life, which began with love, ended with bitter recriminations and abuse. Finally, in a fit of jealousy or rage, my father is said to have caused my mother's death, and fled from England. I was claimed by my Indian relatives, who taught me to hate the very name of Englishman. That is my story. You heard the name of Clonville when the news was one of the topics of the day. My father died somewhere abroad, and I came into the inheritance of the family mansion, a queer sombre old place which now goes by the name of The Haunted House."

"I grew up wild and reckless," continued Clonville, reflectively, "and finally, pressed for money and not liking work, I joined this band as a lieutenant. The captain was killed in a conflict, and I was promoted to his place. It is I who have made the name of Il Diavolo a terror—I who have been the scourge of travellers in these parts for the past three years!"

He seemed to feel of sort of gloomy pride in thus confessing himself an outlaw.

"I like ease and gaiety," he resumed, "and sometimes tire of this cavern and the everyday eating and drinking, varied with the exercise of my calling, and when I feel thus restless I go somewhere and spend a few weeks in enjoyment. Barbi is very well content in being left in command, and the men think all is right. They are only too glad to have me with them part of the time. Thus I pass a delightful existence. I visit Paris, England, Naples, any place I for the moment prefer, and never once has my identity been suspected. In England I generally call myself Mr. Clonville, in Paris and elsewhere I go by the title of Lord Clonville, which I prefer, although I have no right to it. But it's not every Englishman who studies the peerage, and foreigners, of course, are easily imposed upon in that respect."

He paused a moment, while a shade of emotion passed over his face, and then continued:

"It was in one of my visits to Paris that I met Blanche Longley. Our first meeting was rather romantic. She was driving, with the lady who acted as her chaperone, in the Bois de Boulogne, when the horses took fright and their driver lost all control of them. Her friend screamed with terror, but she sat pale and motionless. I stopped the horses—it was not a difficult thing to do—so the two ladies were so kind as to think that I had saved their lives. From that time, Blanche and I met often. I was known to her as Lord Clonville. I grew to love her with all my strength—she was so different from me. I delighted in her golden hair and soft blue eyes, so completely opposite to my own dark looks, and she loved me—I know she did! I delighted in her delicacy of appearance, so opposed to my own rude strength. In short, Sir John, I almost worshipped her!"

His voice trembled and his face was convulsed with emotion. Apparently ashamed of this weakness, he struggled to recover his calmness and soon succeeded.

"I said Blanche loved me," he said. "I was right, but her ambition was stronger than her love, as I now know. I told her a very plausible story about not being free to marry before I had attained the age of twenty-eight—I was then twenty-seven—and, astute as she was, I deceived Blanche thoroughly in that respect. But I assured her that I could contract a secret marriage, which should ultimately be acknowledged. She believed me a lord, and immensely wealthy. She consented to a secret bridal!"

Sir John uttered an exclamation.

"Yes," continued the brigand, thoughtfully, "she consented. Anything can be done with money, Sir John, and we were married in a quiet chapel, with but two witnesses besides the priest, and our marriage was perfectly valid. We were neither of us Catholics, you know, and were, of course, married in a Protestant chapel. One of the witnesses has since died, and the other—Blanche's maid—still lives, I believe!"

"Blanche married—and to you!" exclaimed the baronet.

"Yes—she is my lawful wife! Her real name is Blanche Clonville!"

"I can hardly comprehend it. Why did you not live together?"

"I kept Blanche quiet more than a year, but she finally demanded to be acknowledged as my wife. Of course, during that year I was not all the time in Paris. I had to be with my band. Blanche grew jealous of these absences, for which I had continually to make excuses to her, and she declared she would follow me the next time I left Paris and see where I went. In the altercation which followed I foolishly confessed that I was Il Diavolo, the dreaded brigand! That did not alienate her. But the discovery that I was no lord at all, but an imposter, overwhelmed her, as I had feared it would. She forbade me her presence. I begged and implored of her to relent, but she would not. Hoping that time would soften her feelings to me—for I was legally her husband—I returned to my band. When next I went to Paris, a few months later, she had gone, and her former chaperone either could not or would not tell me where. All I could learn was that two months before my arrival, she had announced her departure, discharged her maid—probably not wishing that witness of our marriage near her—and had departed. I searched vainly for her, but could not find her. Until to-day I have had no clue to her whereabouts."

"But how did you know of me?" inquired the baronet.

"Oh, Blanche used often to boast of her wealthy relative, Sir John Courtney, but it never occurred to me that she might have gone to your dwelling."

"And how did you learn about Ralph's being in Germany?" Blanche couldn't have known that!"

"After I had learned so much about you, I very naturally inquired about your family of English tourists whom I frequently met in Paris. In that way I picked up a little information."

"So Blanche is actually your wife?"

"Actually and truly my wife! And I love her now more than ever. I would give all I have in the world to reclaim her. If she would only forgive me I should be supremely happy."

"Would you give up your present occupation, and endeavour to become a respectable member of society?" asked Sir John, thoughtfully.

"I would! I would do anything to regain her. I know her faults—she has many—but I love her, and can excuse them all! Do you believe she would forgive me, Sir John, and reinstate me in her affections?"

"I do not know. She has been to blame, but you have cruelly and basely wronged her in working upon her ambition to induce her to become your wife. Whether she would forgive you or not, I cannot say, but you might apply to her and express your penitence!"

"Would you be my ambassador to her?" asked the brigand, with feverish eagerness. "Will you bear to her a message from me?"

The baronet assented.

"And will you use your influence in my behalf?"

"No, I cannot promise that. I am very sorry that Blanche should ever have been betrayed into a marriage with you; but having been, perhaps the best had better be made of the affair. If you would reform, you might have some chance with her!"

"But, if you were my ambassador to her, you would say nothing against me—nothing to prevent her forgiving me?"

The baronet hesitated.

He regarded the brigand narrowly and searchingly. Perhaps he saw in the anxious face before him the gleam of a better nature; perhaps he thought that that erring soul might yet be redeemed, for he answered:

"No, I will do nothing to dissuade her from giving you. I will state your words fairly to her, and leave her to act upon her own judgment."

"Then you shall go to her immediately!" cried Clonville, eagerly, starting to his feet. "You shall start within the hour. From this moment, Sir John, you are free!"

"But your man? Will they not object?"

"I am master here!" returned the brigand-chief, proudly. "They would not dare gainsay my word. Your money, of course, was taken from you when you came. How much had you?"

Sir John named the amount.

The brigand drew his purse from his pocket and handed it to the baronet.

"That will more than cover your loss," he said. "Have you anything else to say to me?"

"I wish to inquire about the two French surgeons, who restored me to reason. Will you not set them free too?"

The chief remained silent for several minutes and finally replied:

"They shall be freed too. They shall accompany

you. One of the men shall guide you to Salerno, and you will hasten thither to your home?"

"I will. But how shall I communicate with you?"

"I will follow you to England. Perhaps, I will start within a week. If Blanche remains scrofulous, I will return. If she is placable, I will go where she will. You will tell her, Sir John," he added, anxiously, "that I freed you as soon as I learned your name? You will also mention that I liberated the French gentlemen at your desire? I want to appear as well as possible in her eyes, after all that has passed between us!"

Sir John promised.

"I cannot let you go, eager as I am to see you depart," continued the brigand, "without at least the show of hospitality. I will have dinner set for you——"

"Pray do not! I could not eat a morsel," exclaimed Sir John, the prospect of going home having greatly excited him. "The sooner I depart the better!"

This eagerness accorded with the brigand's mood.

"Your clothes are very shabby, Sir John," he said, "but you can get new ones on your way. I will go out and speak to my men, as I wish to explain your departure to them!"

He left the chamber, proceeding to the main cavern.

He found the Frenchmen the centre of a crowd of bandits, who were eagerly questioning them as to the mode in which they had performed their miraculous cure upon the baronet. The explanations of the surgeons were considered as very unsatisfactory, and one or two of the men expressed an opinion that they were in league with the Father of Evil, or else that they were saints.

"We'll try their saintliness!" growled Barbi. "One of our fellows is getting worse, and I foresee that these prisoners are bound to lose their heads or pay a big ransom!"

A long laugh greeted this remark.

"Peace, my men!" said their chief, as he appeared among them. "The Frenchmen have done well with the wounded, as you told me yourselves. I am going to send them away within the hour."

A low murmur was the only response the brigand received from his men.

"A couple of simple surgeons cannot pay a ransom," continued Il Diavolo, unheeding the slight demonstration of his hand. "They and the Ingleses are free!"

Not a man, except Barbi, ventured to look displeased at this statement.

"Lieutenant," said the chief, "I think of making another journey soon. You will, of course, be left in command. It therefore, ill becomes you to set an example of insubordination!"

Barbi's face was instantly wreathed with smiles at the thought of soon again being the nominal captain of the band.

The chief then turned to the Frenchmen, who found themselves unable to comprehend the scene, and said:

"Gentlemen, you are free. A guide will conduct you and the Englishman to Salerno!"

The surgeons expressed their gratitude at the brigand's unexpected act of justice. Sir John was then summoned from the inner cavern, and the little party prepared to take its departure.

"Where is Annetti, to whom I owe my life?" asked the baronet, vainly looking around the chamber for her. "I would bid her farewell!"

At the sound of his voice, Annetti appeared from his late cell.

She had heard the captain say that the Englishman was going, and she felt a little natural regret at losing her late charge, but this regret was speedily lost in her joy at his recovered freedom.

"Heaven bless you, Annetti!" said the baronet, pressing her hand to his lips. "May you be rewarded as liberally as you have dealt kindly with me! If you ever need a friend, apply to me!"

A tear dimmed Annetti's bright eyes, as she inquired the baronet's name and residence, and she then bade him farewell.

The captain exchanged a few last words with his ambassador, and the little party, with its guide, left the brigand's cavern.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Beneath there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said,

This is my own, my native land!

Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,

As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,

From wandering on a foreign strand? Scott.

WHAT exultant emotions thrilled the heart of Sir John Courtney as he found himself beneath the sun-shine of heaven, and with the fresh air fanning his brows!

Although his year of captivity was as if it had not

been, the very air he breathed seemed strange to him and the breeze that sighed among the trees had an unfamiliar sound.

He almost doubted as he caught sight of his ragged clothing and the long grey beard that lay upon his breast whether it was indeed himself who was walking amid those strange scenes—or whether he was not dreaming.

He rubbed his eyes with his hands to assure himself that he was really awake, and then started as he for the first time noticed the long claw-like nails that disfigured his fingers.

How strange that a year had dropped from his life, like a bead from a string!

How equally strange had been his return to consciousness!

In his great gladness, he clasped the surgeon who had restored him in a strong embrace and sobbed like a child.

When he had recovered his calmness, and had become somewhat used to his personal appearance, he reflected upon the revelation that had been made him by Clauville.

"Everything seems strange!" he murmured. "I can hardly believe that brigand told me the truth. Yet it must have been so. If things would only seem more real!"

They walked to the place where the horses were kept, mounted, and took their way to Salerno.

The day was beautiful, one of those lovely Italian days that linger in the memory, but to the baronet all looked dreamy and unreal.

He almost expected to awaken soon in his library at Courtney Hall.

But as the party journeyed onwards, he lost this dreamy sensation, and began to look at affairs in their true light.

Arrived near Salerno, they dismounted and their guide left them, taking his horses back with him. They walked the remainder of the distance, and on reaching the town the French surgeons went to rejoin their friends, while the baronet proceeded to a quiet hotel, but not before he had again expressed his gratitude for the great service they had rendered him. They declared that they were equally indebted to him, since they owed him their freedom, and they separated from him with much regret.

The first act of Sir John was to submit himself to the hands of a barber—the second to a tailor.

With his beard removed and his whiskers trimmed, and with a decent suit of clothes, he began to feel more like himself.

He had already begun to lose sight of his late experiences, and to look forward to his return home.

He pictured Amber's delight—Ralph's joy—at beholding him, and he almost wept in anticipation of the joyful scene.

With an impatience and eagerness to clasp them in his arms, he left Salerno that very night, and proceeded to Paris with as little delay as possible. He did not stop in Paris over-night, but sped on to Boulogne, and hastened to London with the utmost rapidity.

Not a doubt entered his mind but that the family was at Courtney Hall, and he proceeded thither without an hour's delay in the metropolis.

Arrived at Hepney, he crossed over to Mr. Goss's Crown Inn, and demanded a vehicle, with the swiftest horses at command.

He waited in the shady little parlour of the inn until the vehicle was being got ready.

Mr. Goss hastened to the parlour to offer his guest some refreshment, but almost fainted on recognizing him.

"Sir John Courtney!" he cried, sitting down. "It is a ghost! Murder! Eavens!"

"It is no ghost, my good Mr. Goss," exclaimed the baronet. "It is myself—Sir John Courtney in person! Did you think me dead?"

"Eavens! What a question! We've buried you! You're in the family vault! Oh, I know this is a warning to me that I'm not long for this world!"

"Buried me?" repeated the baronet. "What do you mean? Be sensible, Mr. Goss. Explain your strange behaviour!"

Gradually recovering his calmness, the innkeeper became convinced that Sir John was still alive, and he responded:

"Then we've buried the wrong man! But I could ha' sworn he was you, Sir John! Greggs fetched a body as he said was yours, and we buried it, and if 'twasn't you I'd like to know who it was!"

A few minutes' thought furnished the baronet with the solution to the enigma propounded.

"It was my brother's body, Mr. Goss. He fell dead beside me, and Greggs must have thought it was me. But I should have thought he would have known my clothing."

Mr. Goss explained that the body in question had been robbed of its clothing.

"Then it was Colonel Courtney as we mourned

over, Sir John. There was no mistake about his being a Courtney!"

It afforded a melancholy satisfaction to the baronet to know that his brother's remains had met with proper burial, but the thought then occurred to him that he was about to present himself to his beloved ones like those like the dead.

"How is the family at the Hall?" he asked, his voice choking with emotion, and his heart throbbing with excitement.

Mr. Goss was silent, and his usually ruddy face lost the colour it had just re-acquired.

Sir John was instantly alarmed.

"Are they ill?" he faltered. "Is Amber—Ralph—dead?"

"Oh, no, Sir John—leastways, I hope not," replied the innkeeper, finding his voice. "But they have left the Hall."

"Left the Hall?"

"Yes, Sir John, and gone up to Lun'on for the season. They are havin' gay times, with balls, and parties, and such like!"

The baronet felt a pang of disappointment.

Had he been so soon forgotten?

"So they are at our town-house?" he asked. "You think they are all well?"

"Well, yes, Sir John," responded Mr. Goss, hesitatingly. "They ought to be. Bessie, Miss Amber's maid that was—but who is now married to a likely young fellow—she had a letter from Miss Longley's maid the other day, saying that her mistress told her that the wedding would soon come off——"

"The wedding!" interrupted the baronet, his face losing its extreme pallor. "Then my great and life-long wish is about to be realized! This is joyful news to meet me on my arrival! The dear children will have one guest at their wedding who will not be less welcome for being unexpected!"

Mr. Goss applied his jacket-sleeve to his eyes, as he said:

"Is this the first you've heard of the news, Sir John?"

"The very first. I thought the family was at the Hall, and came straight through. I shall go back to night by the next train."

"You look like a ghost, Sir John. No wonder I thought you was one! Won't you have a bed here over-night?"

The baronet replied in the negative.

"Then I'll just order a dinner for your honour," said the innkeeper, "and while it's getting ready I'll tell you all the news."

He withdrew, countermanded the order for the vehicle which Sir John had ordered, gave directions for a dinner suitable for his distinguished guest, and then returned to the parlour with a calmer demeanour.

"When did you say this wedding was to be, Mr. Goss?" asked the baronet.

"I don't know the day, Sir John—but soon, of course. I've been hopin', sir, that something'd happen so that they wouldn't get married at all!" said the innkeeper, desperately.

"And why not, sir?" questioned Sir John, sternly.

"Because to my humble thinking, she ain't worthy of Sir Ralph—I mean Mr. Ralph—beg parding, Sir John!"

"Not good enough for my son! Miss Amber not good enough for my son!" repeated the baronet, his sternness deepening. "Be careful what you say."

"I ain't speaking of Miss Amber, Sir John!" whimpered Mr. Goss. "She ain't to be the bride! It's to be Miss Blanche."

Sir John looked stupefied.

"Miss Blanche to be the bride!" he said, in a hollow whisper.

"Yes, Sir John. So she told her maid!"

The room seemed to reel round the baronet. Could it be, he asked himself, that Blanche would commit a crime to obtain the rank for which she had always been so ambitious? Would she commit bigamy?

Then he thought of Amber, how carefully he had educated her to love his son, and of how terribly she must be stricken by this blow.

How his heart yearned over her at that terrible moment.

"I have returned to comfort her," he thought. "She shall find balm in her old father's affection."

The tears sprang to his eyes and relieved the weight upon his brain.

"Is—Is Miss Amber well?" he asked, hesitating how to put the question in the most delicate manner, and learn if his darling were suffering.

"I—I don't know Sir John," faltered the innkeeper. "I will tell you the truth, your honour, before you can hear it from others," he added, with resolution. "Miss Blanche drove Miss Amber away from the hall more than a year ago."

"Drove her away?"

"Yes, Sir John. She sent her off one night, with-

out any of her luggage, which it is at the Hall this minute, and Miss Amber has never been seen since."

The baronet uttered a groan of anguish.

"This—is this is incredible!" he gasped.

"Bessie, Miss Amber's maid, overheard the whole, Sir John. She listened, I suppose. She said that Miss Blanche came to Miss Amber's room and told her she was a dependent, and that Mr. Ralph hated her, and more stuff like that, and told her to leave the Hall immediately. Miss Amber was heart-broken, and went on foot to the station, where she took a ticket to Lunton. Since then, no one has seen her."

The baronet pressed his hands against his heart, as if to still its tumultuous beating.

"We think, Sir John," ventured Mr. Goss, "as Miss Amber got a situation as governess, though of course we know nothing about it. Only she didn't have much money, your honour, so Bessie says, and if she's alive, she must be doing something. But she was such a delicate young lady, Sir John, that I much misdoubt if she's living yet!"

Again the baronet groaned with his terrible mental suffering.

"There's not one of the tenants, Sir John," continued the innkeeper, "who will be pleased with the new Lady Courtney. But how I am rattling on, your honour, and the train going in a couple of hours. May I make so bold as to ask you how you came to be so long away?"

"Another time, Mr. Goss—another time!" responded the baronet, in a low, choked voice.

The innkeeper was awed by the terrible emotion of Sir John, and stole from the parlour, leaving his guest to himself.

The dinner, hastily prepared, was soon placed upon the table, but the baronet made no effort to eat. He did not even take seat at the table.

He had pictured continually on his journey towards the warm welcome he would meet, and the joy his return would impart to his family—but how different was the reality!

Ralph, his noble son, was, perhaps, on the point of being entrapped into a marriage with a woman who had already a husband living, and Amber, his darling, had been driven forth from her rightful home into the hard cold world!

It was no wonder, then, that the baronet was almost distracted with his grief.

The minutes dragged like hours to his tortured mind. He paced to and fro with hurried step, inaction seeming torture, and indulged in all sorts of conjectures as to the whereabouts of Amber.

When it became time for him to go to the station, Mr. Goss made his appearance, saying:

"I have bought your ticket, Sir John. Here it is. I will accompany you to the train!"

The baronet took the ticket and preceded Mr. Goss to the front of the inn, where a small crowd of his tenants had assembled, Mr. Goss having hastened to spread the marvellous news of their landlord's return to them alive and well.

Sir John was greeted by them with enthusiastic cheers, and he mechanically raised his cap in acknowledgement of the honour, but he had the look of a blind man grouping about in a strange place. His pale countenance awoke many, and some of the tenants were convinced that it was the ghost of their landlord they beheld.

The innkeeper, startled at the baronet's physical weakness, begged him to lean upon him, and he then conducted him to the station, and soon after placed him in the train.

It was late in the afternoon when Sir John reached London, and he drove immediately to Courtney House, dismissed the cab, and knocked at the door himself for admittance.

(To be continued.)

We believe that a sum amounting to upwards of £4,000 is annually accumulated at the War Office by the unclaimed effects of deceased soldiers. The Secretary of State for War has now nearly £50,000 in his hands on this account, and we understand that it is Lord De Grey's intention to establish a Soldier's Widow and Orphan Fund, of which this sum will form the nucleus. It seems the appropriate and exact way of applying such a fund, as it will come to the heirs of soldiers, if not the special heirs who might, would, could, or should have received the money.

FUN AT HOME.—We advise you not to be afraid of a little fun at home, good people. Don't shut your houses lest the sun should fade your carpets, and your hearts, lest a hearty laugh shake down some musty old cobwebs there. If you want to ruin your sons, let them think that all mirth and social enjoyment must be left on the threshold without when they come home at night. When once a home is regarded as only a place to eat, drink, and sleep in, the work is begun that ends in the gambling-houses and reckless

degradation. Young people must have fun and relaxation somewhere; if they do not find it at their own hearthstones, it will be sought at other and less profitable places. Therefore, let the fire burn brightly at night, and make the homestead delightful with all those little arts which parents so perfectly understand. Do not depress the buoyant spirits of your children. Half an hour of merriment around the lamp and fireside of a home blots out remembrance of many a care and annoyance during the day, and the best safeguard they can take with them into the world is the influence of a bright little domestic circle.

FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

FAIR Queen of Summer, once again
Good-by, good-by to thee,
Good-by, to thy attendant train,
And grateful thanks to thee
For gifts bestow'd—so lavishly
By thee, through heav'n's courtesy.
Oh summer! could I bid thee stay,
You should not stay away a day.
No more I see the stately trees
With smiling nod bow to the breeze;
No more I hear the busy hum
From the forest warblers come;
And wither'd are the flow'r's fair
That yesterday were blooming here.
The wind's keen and fitful blast
From north and south, comes rushing past—
And nature far away has cast
Her fairy robes of yesterday
To don her saile gear to-day.
For stern King Winter comes amain
Followed by all his frosty train.
Queen Summer knows her hour!
And with her fair attendant train
At once retreats, with flying feet
Before King Winter's power.

FRED. C.

THE VILLAGE BEAUTY.

NORWOOD LESTER, a young man of high character, elegant demeanour, and fine fortune, every way a shining mark in society, and just returned from several years of foreign travel, stood with his friend Frank Morton in the curtained recess of a window, from which convenient post they could see passing before them the glittering revellers of the gayest ball of the season.

"That lady is the belle of the room," said Frank Morton, as he marked the direction in which his companion had been gazing for some moments with a look of absorbed admiration. "I need hardly ask your opinion of her."

"A really beautiful woman, moving about like a natural queen, divinely annointed, with majesty and sweetness."

His friend smiled.

"You are an enthusiast in beauty, Lester, but for once I can almost unite even with your earnest praise. Augusta Seaton is beautiful, and certainly seems marked out as queen of hearts by the number of admirers that hover about her."

The young beauty, conscious, but most serenely, loftily conscious of her exceeding loveliness, was at this moment moving through the mazes of a slow and dignified dance; and the two gentlemen had ample opportunity to enjoy that wonderful charm of face and form which we call beauty, but which defies analysis and mocks description, floating before the beholder's eye "like opaline dove's neck lusters, hovering and evanescent."

Norwood Lester gazed with all his enthusiast soul beaming in his eyes.

"Do you see," said he, at length, "the noble carriage of her head, and her hair, how superb! and superbly arranged—the heavy, shining braids wound around so richly like a gleaming crown, and the little ringlets escaping below so luxuriant and golden, like curling tendrils of the vine. And then her form and her whole manner so full of grace!"

"Come, come," said his more sober friend, "I cannot allow you to fall in love at first sight so desperately. What is to become of the numerous expectant young ladies who have promised themselves some pleasant flirtation with you before your fate is settled? Keep your heart whole for a little time I beg of you, else where will be the glory of conquering it?"

"You surely know me better," said Lester, with a quiet smile. "I speak as a lover of beauty, warmly, enthusiastically, but you heard more glowing praises from my lips when we stood entranced before the Venus at Rome."

"When you stood entranced, you mean," retorted the other, laughing gaily. "I do not plead guilty to your poetic imagination, always ready to set aglow. But this is a different affair, a living, breathing woman

—a true daughter of Eve, with seductions as numerous as her golden hairs. I really must take care of you."

"Not the least danger as yet. Love is quite another feeling with me from the most ardent admiration, as you may learn sometime. I look upon this lady with the highest delight as a beautiful work of God, but she could make no deep and abiding impression upon me unless I was fully satisfied that her soul was one worthy the exquisite temple that shrines it. The outward sign may be deceptive—though truly," he continued, with new warmth, as her graceful form again came floating before him like a thing supreme and apart amid the troop of dancers—"truly she does look like Shelley's lady—

"Whose form was upborne by a lovely mind,
Which dilating had moulded her mien and motion
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the ocean."

"*Nous verrons,*" replied his friend, quietly. "Shall I give you an introduction to this peerless enchantress, this divinity in woman's form?"

"Why, yes," as if the thought of approaching more nearly the charming vision had but just occurred to him. "Yes, it would certainly be pleasant. I should feel much indebted to you."

Accordingly, at the earliest opportunity, Norwood Lester was presented to the queen of the *fête*, and met with a cordial and gracious reception; for his name had already been whispered in her ear as the most brilliant and distinguished of all the probable candidates for her favour.

With sentiments so propitious on both sides, the introduction was naturally followed by familiar home visiting; and here, with her whole mind bent upon the lofty lady of the festival appeared still lovelier, infinitely more engaging.

Norwood Lester felt that a spell was upon him; and notwithstanding his confident assertion, and at the time firm belief, that no woman could impress his heart who had not first satisfied his judgment, it now required all his strength of resolution, and firmness of principle to defer the avowal of a passion that would speak its own language continually in his glowing eye and the deepened tone of his musical voice.

It was deferred, however, in obedience to the still voice in the depths of his heart, which whispered very clearly that he had not yet the full assurance that his soul needed before contemplating with a feeling of secure happiness the sacred and everlasting bond of marriage.

He had thought much upon the subject of unhappy and unsuitable connections; his mind had been deeply impressed with several cases occurring in his own immediate circle of acquaintance—young people with feelings as warm and unworldly, and hopes as high as his own, whose wedded bliss, beginning sweet as the morning light, had perished like the morning daw; and a steady determination had settled in his mind that he never would poll his own happiness and that of another by any hasty conclusion in a matter of such infinite moment; that he would wait for a full and deliberate conviction that the character he was studying harmonized in all essential points with his own, and promised still further to harmonize through the power of a love as deep, and strong, and enduring as he knew himself capable of feeling.

Thus he was not exactly the one that a fair face could make a fool of, though from his ardent imagination and fine poetic sensibility a devout worshipper of beauty and peculiarly liable to be caught in "the strong toil of grace."

The warning voice of his higher nature calling for a fitting mate or none, would make itself heard, though the siren sang ever so sweetly; through all the witchery of loveliness he had as yet passed untrammelled, if not untouched, for his heart had still refused its full assent to the passionate promptings of youthful fancy.

But now the fairest temptation of all had crossed his path, and with a winning sweetness that his enraptured senses seemed more than mortal, beckoned him on to a blissful future.

Among the family group whom he met habitually at the house of Mr. Seaton was a young girl of a most engaging countenance when its brightest expression was caught, but so modest and retiring in manner, and so simple in attire, that he had scarcely noticed her beside the brilliant daughter of his host.

She had been introduced to him as Emily Wilmot, a cousin from the country, who was spending the winter with them; invited, as Augusta afterwards informed him, "to give the poor girl a glimpse of life and the world, but it will be to little or no purpose, I fear," she added, in a tone half of pity and half of scorn, "for as you will soon see, she is so shy and so reserved, that very few can become acquainted with her, and she seems out of place in society."

"Her face is rather pretty," said Lester, remarking, almost for the first time, how singularly delicate and refined in expression were the features bent so placidly over her sewing in a quiet corner of the room.

"They call her the beauty of her native village," returned Miss Seaton, "and her face certainly has some pretensions to beauty, but she has no air, no manner, and cannot make any use in the world of the few accomplishments that a country clergyman's daughter has been able to acquire; so that it is after all no wonder that she prefers a book to the conversation of our most attractive gentlemen."

"Your most attractive gentlemen do then pay her some attention?"

"Yes, I can hardly account for it, but she does receive attentions from persons of indisputable taste, and the most enviable position in society; yet their notice never seems to flatter, hardly to give her pleasure. Now, there is young Morton, your own intimate friend, standing beside her at this moment—not another in our circle is more courted and caressed among the ladies; half of them would give their eyes, perhaps their hearts too, for one of those fine speeches and significant attentions that he lavished upon a simple country girl."

There was something in the tone of these remarks that jarred upon the spirit of Norwood Lester, and if they had not fallen from the lovely lips of his mistress, he would have turned away with positive distaste. As it was, they only stirred within him a vague feeling of discontent towards the idol of his fancy, and a disposition to observe more closely the gentle girl who had unconsciously been the subject of them.

Her eyes were now raised at intervals from the sewing that still remained in her hand, for Frank Morton, a gay and gallant youth, so fascinating in manner that with plain features he was generally regarded handsome, lingered at her side, intent upon engaging her in conversation; though none of those encouraging signs which he was accustomed to meet from bright eyes and rosy lips indicated any particular pleasure in his presence.

He had preceded his friend Lester in visiting at the house, and gradually, without knowing how, became interested in the quiet cousin, who seemed to sit apart as well as in person from the gay company of visitors that gathered in a nightly levée about the brilliant Miss Seaton.

It was almost as much a mystery to himself as to some of his lady admirers, "how such an unpretending, demure young lady could attract the dashing Mr. Morton. One would think his taste required quite a different character."

But so it was.

He found himself listening to the least remark from her low and earnest voice, and had not encountered many glances from her dark eyes before he acknowledged that quiet as she seemed "there certainly was something remarkable in her."

He soon made the discovery that she was passionately fond of flowers, and covertly gratified his desire to please her by presenting bouquets to Mrs. Seaton, who accepted them with smiles and thanks, and arranged them in her splendid vases without a suspicion that she owed those profuse and costly yet delicate gifts to the quiet influence of her niece.

Morton himself cared little for flowers—that is, he had never felt the vivid pleasure of those who see the very spirit of grace and beauty in their delicate forms and gorgous hues, and revel in their rich odours with a delight too extravagant to be lavished upon material things, did they not seem exquisite links between the words of soul and sense, with a voice among their tender leaves whispering the sweetest secrets of both.

Such were they in the eyes of Emily Wilmot, and Morton learned to look regularly for his reward in the glow of pleasure that mantled upon her usually placid face, and the words of almost rapturous praise that in her enthusiasm would sometimes over-leap the barrier of reserve that habitually checked her feelings.

Not that he was at all in love, or at least conscious of any such indiscretion. There was little in her character that he had been accustomed to think worthy of admiration.

What should he do with a partner who could rarely frame an easy reply to the graceful common-places of gay society; who never danced; who possessed not a single showy accomplishment to gratify his pride before the world?

If he meant to live in the woods, then it might be enough to satisfy his taste in beauty that her large expressive eyes were the mirrors of a noble soul, that the colour on her cheek was like the downy bloom of a peach, and her dark hair so rich and glossy that its shining masses, though smoothed away from her ample forehead with perfect simplicity, would almost have thrown the lustre of beauty around a homely face; these would suffice to please his own eye as they had already touched his fancy; but there were other considerations befitting one of his expectations and position in society.

The lady of his choice must make a brilliant

figure; he could not be happy with one whose unobtrusive merits made no sensation in the world. No indeed, it would never do to think of her as Mrs. Morton; but yet day after day he sought her society, and began to regard as insipid triflers the many young ladies who sported brilliantly each and all of the indispensable requisites which he had enumerated in his ideal of a wife.

When he saw the attention of Lester drawn towards the object of these conflicting thoughts, a vague feeling of uneasiness possessed him, and he watched their advancing acquaintance with something very like jealousy, especially as he could not see that her manner was decidedly more favourable towards his friend.

Her manner was in this case a true index to her feelings. With the keenly discerning eye that so often looks out from the quietest exterior, Miss Wilmot had read the characters of the crowd that moved before her like the figures in a drama, and had early perceived the superiority of Norwood Lester to all who visited at her uncle's house—indeed, to all whom she had ever seen. From the time of his first appearance he was to her "the star of the goodly company."

He little dreamed of the appreciating eye that was silently taking note of every word and action, and through them reading his very soul.

While her spirit was veiled as with a heavy mantle by the reserve and timidity fostered by her secluded life, his shone forth through all the advantages of fortune and education like a gem in a splendid setting, that heightened at every point its native brilliancy, and thus it was natural and unavoidable that he should be to her "a bright particular star," while she still sat in the shadow of obscurity to him; that already

In her coy and virgin breast
Dwelt preference, not of passion born,
The love that hath a holier rest.

It interfered not at all with her enjoyment of his presence that he appeared before her as the ardent and exclusive admirer of her charming cousin, for no thought of appropriation mingled with the dawning of love in the heart of a true woman.

She too could admire and follow with entranced eyes the brilliant creature who in all assemblies of the young and gay stood without a peer, supreme in loveliness, like a being of some brighter world. It was with no discordant emotion that she saw the noble figure of Norwood Lester beside this perfect embodiment of woman's grace and beauty, and she could look forward through the fascination of his fancy to the ultimate enchainment of his heart without a single selfish feeling.

Her own eyes had hitherto been blinded to the faults of Augusta's character by the dazzling splendour of her beauty and the charm of her gracious manner, and it seemed the most natural thing in the world that this feeling should be shared by one with whom she already claimed a secret sympathy.

A group had gathered around the centre-table one evening to look over a new and splendid folio of prints that Mr. Seaton had just presented to his daughter.

Some beautiful engravings of views on the Rhine fixed the eye of Lester, and led to an animated description of his own adventures on the banks of that glorious river, which he had repeatedly traversed and lingered near, enjoying with the keen zest of a poetic mind every romantic and story-haunted spot. Warming with the memory of scenes that might well inspire the dullest fancy and exalt the most earthward tending soul, he could not forbear quoting some of the magnificent lines of Childe Harold, descriptions so full of the fire of genius that no tourist can follow in the noble poet's track without recalling those vivid pictures, and feeling anew their wonderful beauty and truth.

Some of the company smiled at his enthusiasm, the unsympathising, complacent smile, with which frivolous souls, unknowing what they do, are wont to chill down to their own unimpassioned level every warm burst of truth and nature.

But it was music to the ear of Emily Wilmot, and her dark eyes beamed with such earnest pleasure that the speaker involuntarily turned to meet their cheering glance.

The soft light of the astral gleamed upon her lustrous hair and uplifted face, glowing with interest. Lester wondered that he had never thought it beautiful; the reserve that habitually shadowed it was gone, and the awakened soul, speaking forth in every feature, made it absolutely radiant.

For a moment he lost the thread of his narrative, but recollecting himself in time to avoid embarrassing her with his observation, he resumed the subject with a new impulse and encouragement to lay open his most delightful remembrances.

In this mood he was a brilliant conversationalist.

A finished education, with the further advantages

of foreign travel and access to the best society abroad, had given full freedom to the powers of his naturally fine intellect; but it was only to a listener whose just appreciation called them forth that the richest treasures of his mind were revealed.

Emily Wilmot was such a listener. There was something wonderfully inspiring in her fine perceptions and quick sympathies.

Lester was not long in perceiving that nothing was lost upon her—that no sentiment he could utter was too refined, no thought too lofty to meet a genial response; and this involuntary flattery, more delicate and potent than any that art could devise, attracted him irresistibly to her side.

She never attempted any display of knowledge—rather shrank from it with an over-sensitive modesty, that effectually concealed from superficial eyes the extent of her information; but it might easily be traced in her ready apprehension of all allusions to subjects of literature or art.

The comparative seclusion of her country life, while it occasioned a certain rusticity of manner that embarrassed her intercourse with gay society, was also to be thanked for a depth of thought and earnestness of feeling not often fostered amid the conventionalities of town life. For in that seclusion her companions had been the best authors of our own and other languages, and their great souls, speaking clearly and powerfully through all the ages, elevated her own to a kindred greatness.

This became apparent when in the excitement of converse upon some high theme the outward visible world, with all its constraining influences, disappeared, and the purer air of the spirit world enveloped her.

Here the village maiden was at home, and amid familiar things her mind flowed forth free and gracefully.

This was a new luxury to Norwood Lester. Instead of the well-bred smile and courteous assent that in deference to his character and position had met him from all around, and perpetually mocked his fervent soul, he found the real warm sympathy of a spirit kindred to his own in its highest moods; and the difference in effect upon his susceptible nature was as the cold glitter of steel to the living, burning electric spark.

He found in Emily Wilmot what he had sought for in vain among women, a mind highly cultivated and richly stored, and a soul of lofty temper, united with the most retiring modesty and the most perfect womanly gentleness; and he began to feel, dimly as yet, that the love of such a being was a jewel of great price.

Still there were times, in lighter and more worldly moods, when these intrinsic merits sank into their native shade, and the beauty and bewitching grace of Miss Seaton reasserted their power.

There was magic in the lustrous glances of her deep blue eye and the surpassing sweetness of her smile, and when, as in this case, she really wished to captivate, it was not in mortal man to resist the fascination of her favour.

Even while conscious in his inmost soul that she was not all he could desire, the effect of her perfect beauty and winning grace of manner upon his imaginative mind was to raise her above all cowl or question, and enthroned her triumphantly upon the highest seat of womanhood. He recalled the lines of Milton :

So absolute she seems
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded—wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discomfited, and like folly shows.
Authority and reason on her wait
As one intended first, not after made.

But here the young man paused; he could not with equally truthful fervour apply to his lovely enchantress the concluding praises :—

Greatness of mind, and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed.

For on this vital point he had secret misgivings that still interposed between the witchery of beauty and his susceptible heart, checking the tumult of admiration that stirred his pulses, and bidding him wait yet longer for his final decision.

A visitor called one evening with a message for Miss Wilmot from her family at home.

She received him with the cordiality natural to her kindness of heart, and the regard which his worth commanded, for she knew him to be a young man of excellent character, and every way to be respected, though labouring under the disadvantages of an ungainly person and an awkward address.

These misfortunes were glaringly conspicuous in the brilliantly lighted parlour of Mr. Seaton, and Augusta, with the wilfulness of a spoiled beauty, determined to make him the butt of her merriment to the

evening, since, as she whispered one of her young associates, "she was forced to endure the presence of such a rustic, it was but fair that he should afford them some amusement."

The unsuspecting youth, new to the ways of the company in which he had suddenly been thrown, and bewildered by the strangeness of all around him, acted with even less than his usual tact, and stood exposed at all points to the scarcely covert ridicule with which he was assailed.

He felt that there was something wrong, and it made him thoroughly uncomfortable, but he was not quick enough or suspicious enough to comprehend the true state of things.

"A village beau of Miss Wilmot's," said the fair tormentor, with a smile, and a slightly curling lip, as she passed where Lester stood. "Do you admire him?"

The tone of contempt, if not the words, reached Emily's ear, and sent the indignant blood mantling to her forehead.

Lester observed it, and his look expressed the same feelings.

He saw through the whole game, and had stood in silent wonder and displeasure to find that the lovely being whose charms he had almost worshipped was capable of wantonly sporting with the feelings of a fellow creature, and even, in her thoughtless mirth, forgetting the common claim of hospitality, which should insure to the meanest a civil reception.

Augusta little suspected the now thoughts that were working in his mind.

Accustomed to pursuing her own pleasure, with but little regard to that of others, unless they chanced to be objects of interest, it did not occur to her that this obscure individual could be of any consequence in the eyes of Norwood Lester, or perhaps that motive would have made her pause and think.

She was not naturally ill-natured, but the haughty feeling of supremacy which from childhood had been cherished by her consciousness of uncommon beauty, and the flattery, voluntary and involuntary, that met her from every side, made her capricious and careless in her conduct towards indifferent persons.

It requires a heart of unusual purity and humbleness to pass unspoiled through the trying ordeal of unlimited and universal admiration which awaits the possessor of the dangerous gift of beauty; and unless a discreet education interposes to ward off the mischief of overpraise, it is not to be wondered at that the young charmer comes to consider herself in the light of an actual sovereign, who can do no wrong.

There were some faults which Lester could overlook, but this failure in womanly gentleness and sweetness of temper struck cold upon his heart, and the beautiful features he had so loved to gaze upon were suddenly lost of the halo of goodness with which in virtue of their perfectness his imagination had invested them, and for the moment their charms were gone.

The voice of Miss Seaton, not so softly modulated as usual, awoke him from his unpleasant reverie.

The unconscious object of her scorn had in his simplicity approached and ventured to address her.

"Did you speak to me, sir?" said the proud beauty, turning her head three-quarters of an inch towards him, with a coldly repelling tone and manner.

There was no mistaking this pointed discourtesy, and the object of it, feeling convicted of great presumption, rose and crossed the room. Norwood Lester immediately drew up a chair, and with a grave yet cordial politeness that reassured him at once, engaged the stranger in conversation. He soon discovered what subjects were interesting and familiar; and with the delicate tact which fine feeling confers, drew from the hitherto awkward youth an easy and pleasant strain of talk.

Nothing of all that passed was lost upon Emily Wilmot.

The conduct of Lester confirmed her most favourable impressions of his character, and gave her the lively pleasure with which a noble soul recognizes its counterpart in nobleness.

She felt, besides, personally grateful for the consideration he had evinced towards herself; and all this shone in her face when their eyes met, and she thanked him with a look so sweet and eloquent that it thrilled him to his heart.

The simple village maiden was at this moment more beautiful to his eye than the fairest of all the courtly throng of fashion; her soul seemed of one mould with his own, and no misgivings arose in his breast to mar the happiness of that thought.

It was not long before Miss Wilmot felt that her visit must be shortened.

The proud spirit of Augusta could ill brook the transitory attentions which she had valued so highly,

and it was a constant irritation to the petted and humoured beauty to see her late admirer turning upon all occasions to Emily's quiet yet radiant face for sympathy and approval.

The last evening of her stay had arrived, and Emily left the lighted and thronged saloon that oppressed her with its empty gaiety, and stole into the splendid conservatory opening from it, where many a delicious hour had been passed amid the perfume and beauty she loved so well. The broad-leaved tropical plants threw a welcome shadow over her as she glided among her favourite flowers, breathing a mute farewell to each. In the quietest recess, lighted only by the silvery moon, she paused and stood long gazing up at the lovely planet, and enjoying the maiden luxury of communion with her own thoughts.

Whose image those thoughts hovered around, it would be betraying the secret of her heart to tell; but when a gentle hand upon her arm dispelled her dreaming, and she turned to meet the beaming eyes of Norwood Lester, it seemed but natural that he alone should be conjured hither by the spirit of that sweet place and hour.

He stood in silence beside her until her cheek glowed and her eye drooped, for she felt, rather than saw, that those dark, soul-full eyes which had long shone upon her dreams, were reading in her conscious face what she would, yet would not, have him know.

"You leave us to-morrow, Miss Wilmot?"

"Yes, I long for my quiet home. It will be most welcome after these few months of unaccustomed excitement."

"You will not forget me, Emily? Remember, that all my hopes go with you."

His voice trembled with earnest and impassioned feeling, and the pleading eyes bent upon her thrilled her whole being.

Timidly she returned the fervent pressure of his hand, and then, while a bright smile broke over his face, he drew her arm within his, and led her slowly through the sweet flowery path she had trodden alone before.

The few words which the place and time allowed him to utter, bore in their deep music a thrilling import to her ear; and when they emerged from that fairy world of flowers and moonlight, it was with the throbbing bliss of loves' plight in heart and soul, though no word of troth-plight had been spoken.

There was much wonderment and no small amount of gossip in the fashionable circles, when some months afterwards it was rumoured that Norwood Lester, the most desirable of all brilliant matches, who might have chosen from among the most distinguished families, was about taking to share his splendid home, the portentous daughter of a country clergyman.

But the subject of all this friendly concern never repented of the unworldly choice his heart had made. If in the more brilliant sphere to which her marriage introduced her his gentle Emily was sometimes found deficient, the passing embarrassment, though painful to her sensitive feelings, interfered little with their happiness.

That was secured by the quick sympathy of their minds, the congeniality of character which daily intercourse developed more and more, and the strong love arising from it at first, and deepening with every year of their wedded life.

This made all things easy to learn on the part of the happy wife, all things easy to bear on the part of the indulgent husband; until all outward inequalities disappeared, and even in the eyes of the world they were a poble pair and evenly mated.

The faith in which Lester had acted was fully confirmed, that true love, discovering its rightful object through all seeming disparities may be trusted with its own mission, and that no transient considerations should decide the momentous event of a union formed for eternity.

Frank Morton consoled himself for his disappointment without much loss of time by choosing out from among his lady friends the dashing Belinda Selwyn, with whom he lived as happily as those can live who have first slighted and then forgotten the impulses of their better nature, persuading themselves that love is a romantic dream, to be forgotten when years of wisdom come, and marriage a thing of household convenience and comfort merely; and in this belief live and die, unconscious of the rich joys from which their choice of worldly pleasures has for ever shut them out.

E. M. K.

A LION AT LARGE.—*Le Nord* states that on the evening of August 30th, a lioness at the Antwerp Zoological Gardens broke out of its cage through a part which gave way, and bounded into the gardens with a loud roar. The visitors were seized with a sort of stupor, and remained fixed to the ground where they stood—a circumstance which perhaps saved them, for the lioness, which would probably have been

excited by exclamations, began to promenade the gardens peacefully with a dignified air, trusting, doubtless, to its cubs following; but they did not stir. The terror of the crowd continued. The keeper brought pieces of fresh meat and threw them before the lions, which devoured them eagerly. But the question was how to make it re-enter the cage, and at length one of the keepers conceived the happy idea of going to the cage and irritating the young lions, whose cries would bring the mother to their side. The ruse succeeded, and the lioness, returning to its cage, was securely shut up. This terminated the disagreeable scene, which had continued about a quarter of an hour.

A BALM FOR GRIEF.

Man hath a weary pilgrimage

As through the world he weaves his way;

On every stage from youth to age

Still discontent o'er him bears away;

With heaviness he casts his eye

Upon the road before,

And still remembers with a sigh,

The days that are no more.

TIME has been called, both by philosophers and poets, the balm for grief, the comforter of those who mourn. So indeed, it may be, with regard to light sorrows, or those that more immediately affect the passions. But there are losses whose extent is made more evident by the revolution of years, in the waste of comfort, the desolation of hope, the impossibility of restitution. To such afflictions, time only seems to bring relief. It hushes and abates for a while the tempest of grief, but it reveals more perfectly the magnitude of the wreck, the depth of a ruin which can neither be repaired nor concealed.

To the sorrows of the juvenile, Time may be a successful balm. Then the heart, full of strength, voluntarily co-operates with the sanitary regimen. It readily finds, or fancies that it finds, substitutes for the desolations made in its sanctuary. If its tendrils are stricken from one press, they are pliant and powerful to adhere to another.

But it is not thus with those who are journeying the downhill of life. The heart, often smitten, clings with a rigid tenacity to what remains. As the circle of its joys diminishes, it seems to spread itself over the whole, endeavouring like a sleepless sentinel, to touch and to guard every point. The affections too, at the approach of age, seem to lose the power of reproduction.

Therefore on the bereavements of such, Time is a balm of little value: their decayed affections having lost the pulse of earthly hope. But under the happier auspices, the balm which time brings to grief must be remarked rather as a sedative, than among those mightier agents which extirpate the root of grief. It is meet that we should look on fading things,

But yet the flower, though cast away,

May live a little while;

So I may not at once decay,

Though parted from thy smile.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.—The latest exhibition of the Royal Academy was the most profitable yet known; the receipts were upwards of £13,000, an advance of more than £700 on the profits of last year, and of nearly £3,000 on the amount received in 1862. Not many years ago, the Academy thought itself lucky in obtaining £6,000 from the exhibition. The sales of pictures from this year's exhibition exceeded by £100 the value of those of the preceding display.

THE COWS AND MILKMAIDS OF HOLLAND.—The most really picturesque attraction of the scene is the herds of cattle. These are of a native breed peculiar to the country, and from the quantity and quality of their milk, as well as from the laudable propensity of the beef to accumulate on those parts that are worth a handsome price per pound, are greatly valued by the people. They are generally of a coal-black hue, but spotted and streaked with white in the most curious manner. The pride which the Hollanders take in their cattle is well deserved, and is very conspicuous in the care they take of them. The cows are kept in stables, often as neat as most of our own kitchens, and far neater than some of them. The majority of the poorer classes in our own country are not accommodated with such good quarters. When they are taken to pasture their feet are covered with leather shoes, lest the dampness of the soil should cause disease of that part; they are always carefully curried and brushed and washed, while in summer they are covered with cotton cloths, that they may not suffer from the attacks of those little winged Zouaves that despoil us so often of our night's rest. In winter they are protected from the cold by blankets. On their way to the fields they are attended by milkmaids of the rudest complexions, who take good care that their tempers are not ruffled, and show the most affectionate regard for their welfare.

THE TRAP.—Evans' Trap; from their ceiling strong and stony. **T**he trap; from the bu... his ar... Miles belief. The ended night... ceeded. **T**he us... time... he co... rope n... at my... whether had m... priest

THE LONDON READER.

The Hollanders have not suffered the rate of milk-maids to die out as we have; and one can hardly avoid instituting a melancholy comparison between the present times and the old in this respect in our own country. How great the difference between those who, in the days of our ancestors, used to carry about the richest of milk in neat little tubs on their heads and after their day's labours were over did nothing but dance with their sweethearts in eccentric circles around flower-crowned May-poles, and that grouty fellow who slinks round to one's back-door in the morning before light, as if he were ashamed of himself, and leaves a wine-quart of water and chalk, after first carefully shaking it in order to mix it!

TEMPTATION.

By J. F. SMITH
Author of "The Will and the Way," "Woman as her Master," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXI.

Wealth comes too late to gladden the lone heart—
Whose spring hath fled and borne no beauteous flower—
Whose leaves have fallen are summer's breath had faded.
Old Play.

"He deserved it!" said Miles, in an under tone, as if to justify, not to his companion, but to himself, the crime they had committed.

It was true; but the speaker was no less an assassin. It is a question whether man has a right, under any circumstances, to punish his fellow-man by death. We have already discovered that schools are better than gaols; perhaps we shall one day arrive at the conclusion that solitude is a severer sentence than death.

Their crime—like most crimes—was doomed to be only partially successful. It is true they gratified their hatred; but the proofs which Peter Quin held of their misdeeds—the possession of which he had so imprudently boasted would at any time enable him to hang them—escaped their search. In vain they ransacked the pockets of the deceased: nowhere could they discover the key of the cabinet—where they suspected they were concealed—and the lock was so ingeniously contrived, that it defied even their experience to pick it. Break it open they did not dare—since it was necessary to their safety that the old man's death should appear the result of suicide.

"He has outwitted us!" muttered Miles, despondingly: "it's all your fault! I would have had the key beforehand—only you—"

"No reproaches!" replied the captain, interrupting him. "Perhaps, after all, the things are not of the importance we imagine!" The proofs which, whilst he lived and was capable of appearing against us, might have sent us to the gallows, are comparatively valueless now!"

Before leaving the house, the speaker, who had far more presence of mind than his companion, proceeded to arrange the room so as to give everything the appearance of a suicide: the table was reversed, as though Peter Quin had kicked it from under him, and the cord which pinioned his arms removed.

"I think that will do!" he said, glancing around. "Yes—yes! Let us leave the place!"

"How?"

"By the roof!" answered Miles: "you don't know half the dodges the old fox was up to? He could at any time communicate with the adjoining house, although we had no means of reaching him! This way—you will see!"

Everything being settled in the office, they groped their way in the dark to the agent's bed-room, in the ceiling of which was a trap door, fastened down by a strong iron chain on the inside. This they raised, and stepped out upon the roof.

"There!" observed the leader, as he let fall the trap; "they will never suspect that any one escaped from the house that way!"

"Never!" said the captain, breathing more freely. "What have you there?" he demanded, pointing to the bundle which his confederate in crime carried in his arms, and which was nothing else than the figure Miles had dressed up to deceive Peter Quin into the belief that he had brought Fanny back to him.

The fellow explained the use he had made of it, and ended by observing, "that it had been but a poor night's work, after all, since they had only half succeeded."

"That," observed his companion, "depends upon the use we make of it; at any rate, it has given us time—and time is often success. Whilst he lived," he continued, "I felt that I walked the world with a rope round my neck and the shadow of the hangman at my heels. Do you know, I have often wondered whether the old rascal were really human or not; he had more cunning than a lawyer—more cant than a priest!"

The first streaks of day began to appear in the east, and from their elevated position they could hear the tread of footsteps in the street below—probably workmen hastening to their daily labour.

Miles observed that it was time to turn in. "Why, what are you thinking of?" he added, seeing that his companion was lost in reflection.

"I am thinking what has become of his granddaughter."

"Of Martha?"

The captain nodded in affirmative.

"It's my belief the girl has bolted!" replied the former, with knowing look; "and has taken with her something that would have done for the old man what he so often threatened to do to us! He wouldn't have been so anxious to get back the child else. Perhaps, after all," he added, "it was her own!"

None knew better than the man who had stolen Fanny from Farnsfield how unfounded was the surmise of the speaker; but he had no wish to make others as wise as himself. He replied by observing "that the death of her grandfather would doubtless make her very rich."

"Very," said Miles; "a capital match for some one—and she'll want a husband! My Bet," he added, in a tone as if he were weighing the pros and cons, "is so infernally jealous, or else—No! it would never do; but you might try—she'd jump at you! But do come in!" he continued, in a tone of impatience; "St. Margaret's has just struck five! It will soon be daylight—we can talk matters over in the morning!"

The captain hesitated no longer, but followed him over the roof, till they reached a similar trap-door to the one from which they had quitted the house of Peter Quin.

"You know your room!" whispered the speaker—for he did not wish any of his lodgers to suspect that he had been absent to so late an hour

"Yes—yes!"

"In the morning, then!"

So saying, the two murderers shook hands and parted.

When Miles descended the following day, and inquired for the captain, he was told, to his surprise, that he had left the house at least two hours before.

Years elapsed before they met again.

When Mr. Foster presented himself at the house of the agent the following morning, he found, to his surprise, that the shutters were closed; he knocked repeatedly, but no one answered him.

His first suspicion was that, unable to restore the child, the old man had fled, in the hope of secreting himself from justice.

"The old monster!" he murmured; "I was a fool to be duped by him!"

And then he knocked again.

His perseverance soon collected a crowd of idlers round the door; none could give him any intelligence respecting the master of the house. One facetious fellow observed that in all probability he was gone on a visit to a certain gentleman whose name is not usually pronounced in polite circles.

"I dare say," said a woman who was standing in the crowd, "that Miles can tell you: if any one knows his whereabouts, he is sure to do it!"

"And who is Miles?" inquired the lawyer.

It was explained that it was the man who kept the lodging-house.

"Ain't the least idea!" replied Miles, in reply to the question which Mr. Foster addressed to him; "I've my own business to mind, without attending to his!"

"Very possibly, my good man," quietly observed the gentleman; "but as I am quite willing to pay for any information you may afford me—"

At the word "pay," Miles's better-half hustled forward. She was a stout, red-faced, virago-looking personage, who used to boast that she could cackle in the hen-chaff a flash cove, or puzzle a beak as well as the best of her customers.

"He worn't out all yesterday!" she exclaimed; "that I know—for I saw him closing the crib!"

One of the bystanders good-naturedly interpreted her meaning to the lawyer, who found the technicalities of his profession much less difficult to understand than Bet's classics.

"He must have left home this morning, then?" he observed: supposition which the timan who lived opposite negatived, by declaring that he had been at work since six o'clock, and must have seen him.

Mrs. Foster proceeded at once to the nearest police office, and speedily returned with such assistance as enabled him to ascertain whether his suspicions were well founded or not. With great difficulty one of the iron-lined shutters was forced open—the door had resisted every effort.

"Curse me!" exclaimed the officer who first entered the room, "if old Peter Quin has not hanged himself!" Miles smiled as he heard the words: they sounded like a pledge of security to him.

There was a general shout from the mob around the door. Such was the detestation the wretched man had been held in, that his hanging himself appeared a fitting termination of his career; several observed that he had cheated the gallows only to give Satan his own at last.

Inexpressibly shocked at the discovery, Mr. Foster, after giving the officers strict orders not to quit the place till his return, left to consult with his client.

The death of Peter Quin—which justice, hoodwinked by the cunning device of his murderers, falsely attributed to suicide—rendered all legal proceedings on the part of his grand-daughter unnecessary.

She was the undoubted heiress of his wealth, which, when his affairs were wound up—as they were at last by the indefatigable exertions of Mr. Foster—was found to exceed the calculations even of those who knew him; his parsimonious habits, his unscrupulous speculations.

The agent had pandered to the vices and passions of humanity, and his harvest had been a golden one.

Martha felt bewildered when informed by the lawyer that she was mistress of a fortune which placed everything life affords, save happiness, within her reach—that she might command luxury, pleasure—all that earth worships, and finds ashes.

The poor desolate creature would have given them all for one kiss from the innocent child whose affection had prodded the solitary ray of sunshine which had gladdened her existence; but with the death of the old man every clue was lost.

The hope of recovering her appeared so vague, so faint, that even her adviser ceased to allude to it.

About ten days after the funeral, which was conducted as privately as possible—the heiress, accompanied by the lawyer, visited the house where she had passed so many wretched years.

It had remained under the guard of the police, to the great disappointment of Miles, who had calculated on securing certain papers which placed him at the mercy of the agent—they were the incentive of his crime.

A crowd of curious idlers gathered round the door as the carriage of Mr. Foster drove up. The neighbours scarcely recognised Martha in her elegant but simple mourning—so different from the old russet stuff gown and faded shawl she had hitherto appeared in.

Some thought that she appeared proud; others observed that she would make the old man's money dy now that she was mistress of his fortune. Could they have read her feelings, they would not have envied her.

"Courage!" said her companion, as she sank, overcome with emotion, upon one of the rickety chairs.

"If she were only here," sobbed his client, "I could be happy! I would have strewed her path with flowers, and asked no other joy than witnessing her happiness! You wonder at my tears!" she added; "that this fortune, which the world so envies, does not flush my cheek with pride, my heart with joy; and yet you have children—beings whom you love—for whom you toil, and glory in the sacrifice!"

"True!" observed Mr. Foster.

"What could replace them in your affection, had violence or crime deprived you of them?"

"Not the wealth of worlds!"

"And yet," exclaimed Martha, "you cannot understand me!"

"You forget there is this difference—they are my children," said the man of law; "and nature—"

"She was my child!" interrupted the unhappy woman, impatiently; "not, as you suppose—for I have read your thoughts—by blood, but by affection! Till I knew her, I knew not what love was! Could I but find her!" she added, wringing her hands; "could I but find her! Then wealth would indeed be welcome to me!"

"It has its duties as well as its pleasures!" observed her adviser, gravely; "and the latter are seldom permanent if we neglect the former! When I reflect on the solitary existence you have hitherto led, I can perfectly comprehend the strength of your affection for this child! The only thing I cannot understand is the mystery you made of its birth!"

Martha coloured deeply: for many reasons she had decided on keeping secret even from the man who had so disinterestedly befriended her, the manner in which Fanny had first been placed under her care. Never would she afford the least clue by which her adopted child might be traced and reclaimed by her family, should she succeed in recovering her.

She had one hope which she had not revealed even to the lawyer.

"This visit is painful—exceedingly painful—to me!" she replied; "there is something in the very atmosphere of the place which chills me! Have you seen that the seals are undisturbed upon the cabinet above? My wish is, that it should be removed with them unbroken to my residence! I have not the

courage," she added, with an involuntary shudder, "to examine it here!"

Mr. Foster left the office to visit the chamber of Peter Quin, and assure himself that the cabinet was in the condition in which he had left it.

The instant she was alone, Martha raised the board beneath the desk, and secured not only the keys, but a mass of papers and letters, most of them labelled in the handwriting of her grandfather.

One by one she arranged the packets in an empty box, which she discovered in one corner of the office, and directed it to be placed in the carriage.

Before the lawyer returned, the board was restored to its usual place.

"The seals are untouched," he said, as he entered the room; "and directly Griffiths arrives he shall see the cabinet conveyed to Harley Street"—the house of the now wealthy Martha. "I believe," added the gentleman, "there are several persons whom you appointed to meet you here—tenants, and—"

"There are two whom I wish to see in private!" observed his client. "Miles—the man who keeps the house next door—"

"He is waiting!"

"And a woman named Nancy Bright—or rather Mrs. Gurtion: she was the faithful servant of my poor mother."

"I will send her to you," said Mr. Foster. "I am aware of your benevolent intentions towards her, and have drawn up the bond as you directed!"

He placed it on the table. Martha read it twice carefully over, and signed her name—the speaker witnessed it.

When the weaver's wife entered the office, she could scarcely restrain the expression of her joy at beholding the daughter of her former mistress restored, as she said, to the enjoyment of her own.

"I have a debt of gratitude to pay," observed Martha.

"Debt!" repeated the woman; "you owe me nothing! It's true the old villa—hem—that your grandfather," she added, correcting herself, "by concealing your dear mother's will, robbed me of the marks of her bounty! I wish that had been the worst of his crimes! God forgive him—he had a sad end, with all his riches!"

Her hearer shuddered—perhaps in her heart she was far from feeling convinced that Peter Quin had died a suicide; she trusted not—for his sake, she trusted not.

"The reparation is late!" she observed, giving her the bond she had just signed; "but I can only alone—not recall the past! This will secure you competence for the rest of your life!"

It was some time before the woman could understand the intention of the speaker: when she did, the expression of her gratitude changed by turns from tears to smiles. Fifty pounds a year to one in her position was wealth.

"You are worthy of your dear mother!" she said, drying her eyes. "The young ones shall go to school now—Dick shall be apprenticed—and—Oh, bless you—bless you! Send for me by night or day, if ever you think I can be of use to you! I would die to serve you! Have you discovered—"

"Hush!" interrupted Martha, placing her finger upon her lip; "he is dead—and let his fearful secrets rest with him! The grave places a barrier between all human judgment! Let us hope that your suspicions are unfounded!"

The weaver's wife shook her head doubtfully. Nothing could remove the strong conviction she entertained that her former mistress had been unfairly dealt with.

True, she had no proof; but suspicions, under some circumstances, are stronger than proofs.

Once more expressing her thanks to Martha, she quitted the house, impatient to make her husband and children acquainted with their good fortune.

When Miles was introduced, he entered the room with that forced confident air with which guilt sometimes attempts to mask its terrors.

The ruffian even went so far as to hold out his hand.

He had for so many years been accustomed to treat her with coarse equality, that he scarcely comprehended the difference between them.

Peter Quin's grand-daughter did not want for tact: she affected not to notice his impertinence. Besides, she had other motives for not quarrelling with him.

"You were in my grandfather's confidence?" she observed, fixing her eyes upon his countenance.

"His confidence, Martha—that is, Miss Martha!" stammered the man. "I thought you knew the old 'un better than that! He employed many—myself, Bet, the captain, and Fogle Jem; but he trusted no one!"

"Where is the man you name?"

"Which one?" demanded Miles, with a certain degree of hesitation.

"The one you call the captain!" answered the

woman, sternly; "it was from his hands that I received my child, and he doubtless was employed to tear her from me! Do not trifl with me!" she added; "my wrongs have made me dangerous—I am no longer the patient, suffering creature you once knew, but armed with the means to crush those who have injured me!"

The assassin trembled, and began to feel that, in compassing the death of the agent, instead of obtaining his liberty, he had merely changed masters.

"I am equally prepared," continued the speaker, "to reward those who serve me!"

"By all that is holy," exclaimed Miles, "I have not seen the captain since—since—"

He hesitated—something whispered him that it would be dangerous to name the exact day.

"Since when?" inquired Martha, curiously.

"I am trying to recollect the time!" replied the man; "but certainly not since the death of your grandfather! You may believe me! What interest can I possibly have to deceive you? Besides," he added, gradually recovering courage, "I wanted to speak with him on my own account! I have sought him in all his old haunts—none of his pals have seen him! Something singular must have occurred!"

"And his chamber?" said the woman.

"Is just as he left it—not a thing has been disturbed! All I noticed was, that a quantity of papers had been burnt by him the last night he slept at my house! The grate was full of ashes!"

"You must find him!" observed Martha, after a pause.

Miles shrugged his shoulders hopelessly.

"Did you examine the ashes in the grate?" she continued. "Yes, I am sure you did—for you have the cunning of the serpent as well as the ferocity of the tiger! Was there no clue by which he can be traced?"

The fellow gave a knowing smile: perhaps he saw in the question some trait of her grandfather's calculating spirit.

Thrusting his hand into a side-pocket, he drew forth a greasy memorandum book.

Between two of the leaves were three fragments of paper, partly reduced to ashes: he placed them on the desk before her.

"There," he observed, "are the proofs that I have not deceived you, and that I know nothing of the captain's hiding-place! If he only knew," he added, with an impudent leer upon his countenance, "how impatient you were to see him, he would fly on the wings of—of—"

The look of surprise with which the heiress regarded him cut short the fellow's speech. He stammered and hesitated.

"The wings of what? Pray continue!" said Martha, bitterly.

"Impatience, Martha—that is, Miss Martha. I mean! Lord bless you—you are not the only young lady in the world who desires to see the captain!"

"Indeed!"

Miles was no stranger to the project which his confederate had once entertained of becoming the husband of Peter Quin's grand-daughter, who he imagined would only be too happy to bestow her hand and fortune upon the handsome, reckless adventurer.

As to her anxiety about the child, although he knew her to be fond of it, he considered it merely a pretence to disguise her real intentions.

Hitherto the prospect of such an alliance had been a matter of indifference to him: now he ardently desired it, as a pledge of security for the past, which began seriously to disquiet him.

Martha partly read his thoughts, and thinking it might serve her purpose, did not choose to disabuse him.

"Whatever my motive," she said, "it is not to you I shall account for it; it is sufficient that I am anxious to find him!"

Miles pointed to the half-consumed fragments of paper still lying on the desk before her.

She began to examine them attentively. They evidently formed part of a letter—the first part merely contained the words, "—ly Grange," and the date "November 1st;" the second, "return directly;" the third, "days to live"—the number of days and the name of the party whose expected death was thus announced were wanting.

Martha would have given much for the fragment which connected them. Faint as was the clue, she determined to preserve it—affection clings to the last hope.

"I shall keep these!" she observed.

The man looked disappointed—for they suddenly attained a considerable value in his estimation when he found that the heiress intended to retain them.

"I may trust to your generosity, I suppose?"

"I'll tell you how far you may trust to my generosity!" replied the woman; "for three months longer I will permit you to inhabit the house you occupy rent free—at the end of which time it must be given up. More: I will even assist you with the means to

follow an honest calling—instead of casting you upon the world with whom you have been so long at war. But to this favour I annex one condition!"

Miles thought not of conditions. At the announcement that he was to give up the house, his coarse, bloated features became livid with rage; it was with the utmost difficulty he sufficiently mastered his passion to observe that he was prepared to pay any reasonable rent.

"No!" said the heiress.

"You can't get a better tenant!"

"I do not intend to let it!" replied the heiress; "it has been the shelter of the wicked and desperate too long! It is but little good I can do in the world—but that little I will attempt! It is my intention to pull both this and the adjoining house down," she added, "and erect a school for the neglected children in this miserable neighbourhood!"

The ruffian, who had hitherto been standing near the desk, staggered rather than walked to one of the rickety old chairs in the office. He trembled violently and sank into it.

"Pull it down!" he repeated.

"And why not?" demanded Martha, with surprise.

"Oh, nothing—nothing!" muttered Miles, partially recovering himself; "only if you do pull it down, you must give up all hope of ever hearing of the captain again: it is not in the neighbourhood that he will ever show his face! No—no!" he added; "you will not pull it down! To be sure you are the mistress now the old man is gone—but his name is yours. You will think twice of it!"

The woman shuddered: she partially guessed the cause alike of his terror and the confidence he expressed that she would permit the house to stand.

"Shut them up, if you will!" he continued; "turn me and Bet into the streets! I dare say we shan't starve! But, for your own sake—"

"Enough!" said the heiress, who wished to avoid everything like the appearance of confidence between them. "I will reflect before I decide. I have other property in the neighbourhood which might answer as well!"

"Better!" said Miles, eagerly; "there is the house the Gurtions live in!"

"Instead of thinking of my projects, think of yourself," interrupted Martha; "use every means to find the man I seek, and rely on my liberality!"

"What if I fail?" demanded the man.

"It will depend upon your future conduct how I shall treat you!" she answered. "Should you be fortunate enough to obtain the information I desire, a note, addressed to me, at the chambers of Mr. Foster, Inner Temple, will be sure to reach me!"

"Why not at your own house, Miss Martha?"

"Simply because I do not intend to intrust you with the knowledge where I reside!" replied the woman. "I know you, and wish to sleep in peace! Now leave me! Serve me faithfully, and rely upon my gratitude; but if I find that you deceive me, you will have no enemy in the world more bitter than Martha Quin!"

"Curse her!" muttered the ruffian, as he left the house; "the old fellow was bad enough, but she is ten times more difficult to deal with: no hold—no grip on her! If she'd only marry the captain, it would be all right—but if he don't turn up—!"

A low whistle completed the sentence.

When his better-half—we might say his two-thirds—for Bet was a human mountain of flesh and bone—heard the result of the interview, woman-like she wanted to return to see the heiress herself, and tell her, in her own expressive language, a bit of her mind; an imprudence which her husband with some difficulty persuaded her against.

"Let her alone!" he said; "she is dangerous to meddle with!"

Disappointed and spiteful, Martha returned to her home, taking with her the papers and packets which she had discovered in the recess, intending to examine them at her leisure. Towards nightfall, Griffiths, Mr. Foster's head clerk, arrived with the cabinet. The little man was now as cringing and obsequious as on their first interview he had been overbearing and supercilious. Like the rest of the world, he knew the value of wealth.

"Any further commands, Miss Quin?" he inquired, in a bland tone of voice, after having seen the cabinet—which he doubted not contained plate and an incalculable amount of treasure, carefully bestowed.

"None!" replied Martha, carelessly; "I shall see your master in the morning!"

It was not intentionally that the heiress employed the word "master"—but in ignorance of the usage *de monde*.

She was too humble in mind willingly to treat upon a worm.

Mr. Griffiths, who was dressed in his very best, black, coloured deeply. His vanity was wounded, and he mentally set her down as a person of little or no discrimination.

Had it been one of the junior clerks, instead of himself to whom the word had been addressed, he would have enjoyed the joke exceedingly.

Still he evinced no inclination to quit the elegantly furnished room in which Martha was sitting. Perhaps he contrasted it with the dingy rooms on the third floor which he had inhabited for the last twenty years in Bowyer Street.

"This is a very nice house!" he observed.

His mistress raised her eyes.

"And very elegantly furnished!" he continued. "You have taste—great taste; and yet I fear, Miss Quin, you must feel lonely at times in it! In fact, I might say very lonely!"

"Yes—yes!" muttered the heiress, impatiently.

"I should only be too happy," continued the persevering little man, without being in the least ruffled by her evident desire to get rid of him, "to call occasionally—as—a friend! I am a bachelor," he added, with a smile; "and my evenings are generally disengaged! There could be no scandal at our time of life!"

Martha rose from her seat with a gesture of superb disdain—which forcibly reminded the clerk of Mrs. Siddons, who was then in her zenith—and pointed to the door. It was not the man's presumption which shocked her—it was his meanness. He shrank out of the room with an air very much resembling that of a cur which had been chidden, muttering as he went an audible curse upon what he was pleased to call "the pride of the upstairs."

Mr. Griffiths was not the only person in world who consoled their wounded vanity by attributing the disdain with which they are treated to the pride instead of the contempt of those with whom they come in contact. From that day, Mr. Foster's client had one enemy the more.

"I was happier in my poverty!" sighed the lonely mistress of so much wealth, as she calmly re-seated herself; "it at least screened me from insult! The bold villainy of the captain was less offensive than the cringing baseness of that man! 'Love!' she repeated, with a bitter laugh; "as if any one but my own darling child could ever love the withered, wretched Martha!"

(To be continued.)

A WONDERFUL STONE.—It is said that a mad-stone, in the possession of Sister Elizabeth, formerly of the Catholic school in Lafayette, now of Valparaiso, cured more than fifty persons who had been bitten by mad dogs. The stone acts as a leech, and, applied to the wound, absorbs all the poison.

THE MANCHINEAL TREE.—The manchineal tree grows on the shores of the West-India Islands, and of the American continent in the same latitude. It is a high, branched tree, with a greyish bark, and not unlike that of the Japan varnish-tree. Its leaves are oval and pointed; its flowers small and yellow, or, as some botanists say, dark purple. It grows on sandy soil, and bears a fruit resembling small apples. Every part of the tree yields a milky juice, very caustic, and consequently poisonous. A single drop of it on the back of the hand will raise a blister instantaneously. The Indians used to employ this juice to poison their arrows. The shade of this tree is also said to be dangerous, and even the rain which has been in contact with its leaves.

THE STORY OF LORD PALMERSTON'S BIRTH.—The second Viscount Palmerston succeeded his grandfather in the year 1757. By his first wife, the daughter of a Cheshire baronet, he had no issue. He married the second time. The story of his second marriage, which we present merely as a story, for we have not been able to authenticate it by any authority which amounts to anything approaching to certainty, is the following:—It is said that the viscount, after his bereavement of his first wife, was riding on horseback through the streets of Dublin and was thrown, and one of his limbs fractured. He was carried into an adjacent house, and upon medical assistance being summoned, it was found that it would be dangerous or fatal to have him removed. The house was occupied by a respectable hatter in middling circumstances. The hatter's daughter undertook the task of nursing the injured peer. The consequence of her attentions was that they fell in love with each other, and the result was their marriage. This lady became the mother of the great English premier. We repeat, we cannot at all vouch for the accuracy of this gossip; but, to say the least, a colourable possibility is lent to it by the fact that in the "Peerges," and in such temporary authorities and chroniclers of aristocratic doings as the "Gentleman's Magazine," no further reference is made to the second wife of the second Viscount Palmerston, than that her name was Mary Mee, and that of her father Benjamin Mee. In the absence of all allusion to her family connections, the inference is almost if not quite inevitable that the lady was of obscure birth. Mary Mee be-

came a peeress in the right of her husband, by her marriage, on the 7th of January, 1783. Sir Henry John Temple, Knight of the Garter, General Commander of the Bath, was the first-born of her marriage, his natal day being the 20th of October, 1784. He was born on English soil; Broadlands, in Hampshire, his father's English seat, having the honour of his nativity. So Lord Palmerston himself wrote it down at the census of 1861.—*McGilchrist's Life of Palmerston*.

MY FIRST BUFFALO HUNT.

WHOEVER would now hunt the bison, or buffalo, as he is always named upon the plains, must seek him far west of the Mississippi.

Formerly, the buffalo is said to have wandered over nearly all North America, though it is probable that the Atlantic States were too heavily timbered to be a favourite range with these prairie-loving animals. During the short northern summer they have occasionally been seen as far north as the Great Salt Lake; but as soon as the first chill of the terrible northern winter approaches they take the hint, and migrate for more genial latitudes, sometimes going as far south as Cobahua; but their favourite winter range has always been the ever-sunny prairies of north-western Texas.

Before the introduction of the horse, the Indians were obliged to stalk the buffalo, and shoot it with their arrows, or else "stampede" the herd, and drive it over the bluff bank of some precipice, where they tumbled down pell-mell to the bottom of the canon, or ravine, when the red men came up, and vulture-like gorged themselves upon the flesh as long as it remained good.

Since the introduction of the horse, however, the prairie tribes are all mounted, and the "drive" has given place to the "run"; nor could a fairer field be found for this sport than are those seas of grass upon which the buffalo is found.

Sometimes the prairie-hunter finds himself upon a flat prairie, where he can command a view for ten or fifteen miles in any direction from the centre of the circle he occupies; at another time, when upon a "rolling" prairie, he cannot see farther than a mile or two, and it is necessary to spend some time upon it ere he can conceive its extent.

When first seen, the buffalo presents a very strange appearance, the smooth hind-quarters reminding you of the familiar farm-yard cattle, whilst the great shoulder-hump, the shaggy fore-quarters, and the savage beards and manes give them a ferocious as well as a comical look.

Their motions are not less singular than their appearance. With their tails struck up right on end, and shaking their shaggy manes, they rush off with a roll in their gallop which is apt to deceive the spectator as to the real pace they are going at, whilst the earth shakes as they thunder over it.

In running buffalo, the white man uses, generally, a smooth-bore, as the bulleta, which may be carried in the mouth, can be dropped down upon the powder without its being necessary to use a ramrod, the moisture upon the bullet causing the powder to adhere to it, which is quite sufficient to hold the bullet in its place for the moment or two it is required, as during the run the gun is carried muzzle in air, and is only thrown down against the animal at the moment it is discharged.

Of late years Colt's heavy six-shooters have been much used, as the cylinder, when emptied of its charges, can be instantly replaced by a loaded one.

Amongst the Indians the bow is almost universally used; for, although some possess fire-arms, they are not so expert in their use as they are with their ancient weapons.

The Indian bow is a short weapon, rarely being more than thirty inches in length; so that they can readily use it on horseback. The bow is generally made of cedar or *bois d'arc*, and these are hardened and strengthened by having sinews glued to the back, the entire length; the strings are twisted sinews, generally deer's; and the arrows are as various as the owners, some being made of dog-wood, others of cane, &c., whilst all are tipped with flint or iron.

Thus armed, an Indian warrior will drive his arrow clean through the largest bison where a bullet from a rifle would have flattened ere it had gone half the distance.

The rifle, the deadly weapon of the backwoodsman when pursuing deer, bears, or turkeys in the woods, is comparatively worthless in a buffalo run; it consumes too much time in loading; the tightly-packed bullet requires too much force to send it home; and, during the time so occupied, the Indian would discharge half-a-dozen arrows, and a hunter armed with a Colt would fire as many shots.

Unwieldy as the buffalo appears, he is, nevertheless, very quick in his motions, and very shy and wary: if

he sees or scents a human being, he takes to sudden and rapid flight.

An Indian warrior and his steed, when stripped for a buffalo run, would form a subject for an artist. A single feather floats from the chivalrous scalp-lock, his quiver of arrows is slung across his back, and his powerful, elastic bow is in his hand; all else is naked to the waist-belt; below, his legs are encased in their fringed leggings, the fringes being the scalp-loops of his slain foes.

His fiery, wild horse, with gleaming eye peeping through a mane that hangs in heavy masses over his broad forehead and floats in long waves from ears to shoulder, paws the ground impatiently, and he arches his neck as he scents the game he is about to pursue.

Then let the warrior spring to the back of his steed and dash off—wild horse and wilder rider—and you see a representation of the living centaur, a mass of moving health and life that no painter could hope to transfer to his canvas.

Imagine, then, instead of one warrior, a hundred, all stripped ready for the run, all well mounted on their trained buffalo horses, all dashing in eager rivalry upon the brown masses of the buffalo, who, wild with terror at the yell of their pursuers, are flying over the prairie, whilst, with inflated nostrils, distended eyes, and swelling muscles, the tawny warriors thunder in the rear, each stride of their mustangs bringing them upon better terms with their victims, as each selects his game, and, placing his arrow on the string, bends the stout bow till its extremities almost meet. Then, loosing the arrow, he sends it through hide and muscle, flesh and fat, till the huge animal, stumbling on a few paces, curls up his tail in the air, and falling to his knees, dies.

A long quavering shout tells of success, and the "brave" urges on his fleet little horse after another. If proper skill has been exhibited, each arrow has brought a huge carcass down, whilst some peculiarity in the make or staining of the shaft points out whose hand twanged the bow.

After the run is over, the arrows are handed to their owners by the squaws, who follow to do the work of butchery; and if more than one arrow has been used, or if any have been carried off by wounded animals, the unskillful hunter is taunted and laughed at by the squaws, and he is glad to hide himself until, upon some happier occasion, he shall have retrieved his character as a hunter.

The squaws, I have said, follow the hunters; theirs is the task to skin, to select the choice pieces for immediate consumption, and to dry and preserve that which is not at once devoured.

At the feast which follows, the savage glut himself with the choicest parts of the game, and his time is spent in wasteful indulgence until all his provisions are expended, when the scene is repeated; for animal life is abundant on the prairies, and a brisk gallop supplies his necessities.

It was in Northern Texas, where the whole year-round is one continued spring, so delightful is the climate, that I had my first run at buffalo. With our guide, an old frontiersman, we numbered six in our party, and we rode gaily forward over the prairie in search of our mighty game. We had not far to go, and had not left our camp where we had passed the night two miles behind us, when we discovered a herd of buffalo feeding in the distance.

The blood, which with anticipation had coursed quickly through our veins, now at the sight seemed to boil, and our first impulse was to charge headlong at the herd.

Our guide, who had killed buffalo ever since he could recollect, prevented this folly by pointing out to us that to charge at the distance we were, and with the wind, would only blow our horses for nothing; and we soon felt the force of what he said.

Circling round the herd, then, so as to avoid giving them our wind, we approached them on one side until we were about half-a-mile distant, when the word was given to charge, and off we went at the top speed of our horses, and we got within four hundred yards ere we were detected.

For one instant they seemed undecided as to our character; the next, after giving a loud snort, they dashed off at their best pace, and our horses, which were all old buffalo-runners if some of their riders were not, increased their speed, and seemed fully as anxious as their masters to overhaul the flying game.

With their absurd little tails, absurd when compared with the animal's size, cocked straight up in the air, and running close together, the buffalo held their course, whilst we thundering after, endeavoured to single out a beast, range alongside, and then empty our guns into its side, behind or through the shoulder.

Repeated cracks of our fire-arms were heard in various directions, and except in the line of our guide, who had brought down two animals, nothing was to be seen effected by our burning powder.

Having got a bullet about half driven home, which

at full gallop I was unable to force farther, whilst pulling up would only have thrown me out of the run altogether, I contented myself by watching the prowess of the guide, who at each discharge of his rifle sent down a buffalo in a cloud of dust upon the plain.

At last even he had had enough, and pulled up his now almost blown horse; when we did the same and then I managed to finish leading my rifle.

The guide gave a satisfied chuckle as he looked back at the dark masses which marked his line in the run, and which had so lately been full of life, and health, and power, whilst I felt very small at my want of success.

Gazing after the retreating herd, I noticed a large buffalo. It had either been wounded by my comrades, or perhaps I had given it the fatal ball. At any rate, I determined to give it the *coup de grace*, and, riding up, took a steady aim at the centre of its forehead. The ball flattened upon the matted mass of hair on the stout skull bone.

Only a novice would have thus aimed at the head. In an instant the fierce beast was down upon me at full charge, and, had not my good little horse nimbly swerved aside, the rush would have cost us both dearly.

>Loading again, and taught by experience, I tried a more vulnerable part, and this time with success. Upon receiving this shot he fell heavily forward, a quiver or two shook the huge frame, then all was still, and the wild lord of the prairie was dead.

It was not a satisfactory hunt as far as I was individually concerned; but I took comfort from the thought that all things must have a beginning, even buffalo hunting.

I may add, for the sake of those readers who justly disapprove of the wanton destruction even of wild animals that in my case the experience was not the pleasure of the mere sportsman, but it was part of the early training for the life of a professional hunter which I followed for some years in Texas.

A. A. T.

HAMBURGH SHERRY.

THIS delicious wine is sold wholesale at the rate of 1s. 2½d. a gallon, and has been imported subject to a duty of 2s. 6d. a gallon, less altogether than 4s. a gallon, about 8d. a bottle, wine merchant's measure. The Customs, however, have discovered that the wine is not wine, and that its main component is spirit, so they have charged it with the spirit duty of 1s. a gallon, which will, it is apprehended, stop the supply of this cheap and wholesome drink.

What the public loses by this rigour of the Custom House will be seen from the analysis of the Hamburg sherry, which, we learn, is composed of 40 gallons of proof potato spirit, 56 gallons of Elbe water, 4 gallons of capillaire, and 10 gallons of sweet grape juice.

The stoppage of the supply of this delectable mixture by the imposition of the spirit duty on it will, it is to be apprehended, raise the price of sherry in hotels and refreshment rooms. The fine Hamburg sherry which cost the importer 8d. a bottle could be furnished to the public by the conscientious landlord at the moderate price of 5s. a bottle, but with this source of supply cut off, a profit of five or six hundred per cent. must be abandoned, or a substitute found; or, in default of that, a higher price must be put on the rich varieties of sherry we drink at hotels.

We are informed that the sherry next above in quality to the choice Hamburg has a basis of cider, not saleable as cider, but susceptible of disguise as wine with certain hot accessories. We confess an incredulity as to the cider, which savours of a reality for which no experience has prepared us. Some spoiled light French wines cheaper than spoiled cider are, however, well known to be used in the manufacture of sherries in this country.

We have all tasted this beverage, which is remarkable for its flatness, relieved with some very ardent spirit. It is supplied to the guest at a first-rate hotel at the moderate price of six shillings a bottle. If you are unreasonable enough to find fault with it, which no one ever did before, you are recommended to try the old East Indian, at only eight shillings.

An immense service would be rendered by a chemist who should go the rounds of the country visiting the first hotels and analysing the wines of each, the result accompanied with a memo. of the price of the article. Whatever the drink may be that is commonly sold as sherry, it seems to us about the same at all the great hotels, and the best, or least bad, sold at six shillings a bottle, is of a quality to be had at three shillings a bottle or less.

The daily press has given elaborate accounts of the new hotels established in London, their distribution of space, their furniture, their living, but why is not something said about their wine? That is really the test.

Let us hear of a house where a genuine wine is to be had at a fair price, and all the rest follows as a matter of course. Certain we are that the best speculation for a great hotel would be good wine at a moderate price. It would be a most profitable novelty.

As it is, the guest who knows what he is about eschews wine, preferring a glass of bad brandy to mix with water at the price of a shilling to a bad pint of sherry at the price of three. And yet the booby of a landlord will say his profit is on his wine. And so it would be if it were wine instead of that rapid, noxious mixture.

There are some exceptions, and they should be brought to light, both for encouragement and example. A mixed commission of chemists and connoisseurs should go the rounds of the hotels and report on what they find in their decanters. The landlords should, of course, be unapprized of the purpose of the visit; but even if they were aware of it, there are many who would no more know how to set about getting a few bottles of good wine to pass for the occasion than to discover the elixir of life or the philosopher's stone.

THE RAVEN'S VOICE.

I WAS a very bold and fearless child, and my brothers and sisters often dared me to go into lonely places in the dark, or do perilous feats of various kinds, which challenges I never refused. Often they set out to play tricks upon me, but it usually happened that they fell into their own traps, while I performed my part in safety.

Very possibly the consciousness that they were about to dupe me gave me more courage than I would otherwise have had, for any unusual noise or appearance would be attributed to one or another coming to frighten me.

But, night or day, I used to go straight up to and touch whatever seemed fearful, and finding the object of doubt resolved itself into very simple elements, I acquired an ease which stood me in stead in times of real danger.

We lived in a large old house built of English oak and bearing its nearly two centuries very lightly. It opened to the south, and the two large parlours looked to the east and west.

The dining-hall and spacious kitchen formed the square of the house, while at the west and back was another large room, sometimes called the great porch, and at the east and back was the dairy, and another porch.

There were three stairways leading to the upper rooms, and a garret, whose ample space was broken only by the great chimney in the centre.

We had a gay and lively house, and were used to a great deal of company and visitors, for my parents were greatly given to the old-fashioned virtue of hospitality.

The humblest wayfarer coming in at the porch was entertained kindly and bade God-speed, as well as the guest whose elegant carriage and servant drove round to the front door on the southwest side.

I am not going now to tell you of my handsome, "gentle" parents, or my brothers and sisters—only about myself.

There were a great many of us when we were all at home, especially in the winter holidays, but at times we were nearly all away.

Boarding-schools, academies, travelling—all claimed us at various times. Yet it was rare indeed that one was ever at home alone.

It so happened, however, and to me.

It was a summer day, and warm, bright and beautiful. The morning promised a lovely day. Just after our early breakfast, a merry party came riding down the lane, in carriages and on horseback, and calling joyously for my father and mother to accompany them on a pleasure trip. They were accustomed to this mode of impromptu festivity, and gaily answered that they would soon be ready.

It was only the day before that my father had returned from the Australian gold-fields, and had brought with him a bag of gold. I knew he had this, for I had seen him the night before counting some out of it, and putting it into another bag, and I sadly wanted to ask him to give me one of the pretty coins, but was too well taught to interrupt or tease him.

Thomas brought the chaise to the door. Father's favourite black horse, whose coat looked like lustrous velvet, and who stepped so proudly, was pawing the ground impatiently as he appeared. He handed in my beautiful mother and I stood looking on with childish pleasure at her beauty and rich dress that so became her. My father suddenly turned to me and said, taking his key to his iron-bound box:

"Run, Ann, and get me the little bag you saw me put away last night."

I was proud to be so trusted; but when I quickly

returned with it, he was already in the chaise, and part way to the gate. He looked out and said:

"No matter now, Ann; you may put it back again, for we are going another road, and I will pay Harry to-morrow. Take care of the key, my dear, and good-bye."

"Good-bye, and a good time to you," I laughingly replied, and ran back to put the treasure in safety.

I hastened indoors again to see them wind down the private way that led through our extensive grounds, and half wished I were old enough to go with them. Hearing a slight noise, I turned and saw a stranger, a figure not unusual, a man with a bundle hung on a stick.

He was leaning on the stone wall, and apparently looking after the carriages. He came forward in a moment, and asked if he might sit down and rest, and if I would kindly give him a drink of beer. Beer was free as water with us.

Of course I said yes, and with light steps soon had him a substantial lunch of bread, cheese, and beer, which he came into the kitchen to eat. Betsey and Hannah were busy, hurrying to finish their work, for they were going out to tea, and spend the evening. They talked gaily about their visit, paying little attention to the stroller, who was quietly eating. He had laid his straw hat on the floor, and I saw that his head was bald on the top, and the thinish hair brushed up from behind over it.

He had prominent ears, low forehead, and large mouth, with a retreating chin, where grew a stubby beard, of grizzly black, like his hair. I did not know why I observed all this, or his eyes, small and hid under greyish brows, that seemed to glance furtively about him when no one appeared to be looking.

His voice was harsh and croaking, and had startled me when he first addressed me.

We were used to strollers of all kinds, as I have said. Perhaps I was mentally contrasting his repulsiveness with my father's noble and dignified features.

He seemed to me very ugly. I was glad when he had finished his meal, and risen to go.

He asked permission to light his pipe, which was readily granted. He went out directly, passing accidentally through the dining-room and out of the great hall, where he lingered for a moment or two.

He had thanked me civilly enough for his breakfast, but the girls laughed and nodded as he went out, and said they should think I had picked up a raven.

All that long, bright day I was busy and happy in the flower garden, or sewing, or reading; and when the girls left, looking very cheerful at their half-holiday, I wished them a merry time, and told them not to hasten home, for Thomas should come for them.

I expected my father and mother soon after eight o'clock, and I told Thomas he might go about that as they would soon be home, and it looked a little like rain.

Heavy clouds were gathering in the west, and the thunder rumbled sullenly.

He took the covered waggon and old grey, and before he went stepped in and said, respectfully:

"Miss Ann, I think you had better fasten the doors, as you may be all alone for a short time, if I go so soon. Would not you rather I should wait till your father comes?"

"Oh, no, Thomas; I don't mind being alone in the least, and you ought to go, lest it should rain hard, for it is more than two miles to ride, and they may not wish to leave in a minute. I expect father and mother every moment. Don't wait."

So Thomas left, and the waggon rattled merrily up the lane.

I bolted the doors, because he had told me to, for otherwise I should not have thought of it.

It grew dark rapidly, and the thunder began to peal heavily, while the wind rose, and the flashes of lightning grew more vivid and frequent.

I went into the east parlor, and looked out to the south, but the sudden lighting up of the sky and the following darkness did not interest me long. I could not see out very well either, as the honey-suckles covered the windows.

The large mirror reflected me as I turned away to cross the room, and I stopped a moment with a natural vanity, for I was young and fair enough to look upon.

I let all my hair fall loose, and wound it in long, shining brown coils over my fingers. It certainly did look handsome, for it was very thick, and fell below my waist, and curled almost of itself as it fell.

There came a great flash of light, and I saw distinctly reflected in the glass a face looking in the window. It was an instant of terror, but I neither screamed nor moved.

The face could not see my face, and I kept my body still, and rolled the long, shining rings off my cold, white fingers. It was an ugly face, and I recognized

it. I had seen it that morning, and I knew what lay before me. I prayed inwardly a brief prayer for help.

Turning from the glass, I went steadily towards the table that stood near that window, and on which I had left my candle. I moved steadily as usual, and took up the water-pitcher and looked in it, then took my candle and went towards the kitchen.

The lightning kept flashing, but the face did not come again. I dropped my candle on the kitchen hearth, and put my foot on the wick. I set down the pitcher on the dresser, and with soft, light footfall hastened through the west room up the front stairs, into my father's chamber, and softly closed and bolted the door at the head of the stairs. I unlocked his box, took out both the bags of gold, re-locked it, and made my way into the great chamber.

I heard voices; I heard the doors tried below. I knew it was not my father. I dared not tremble nor grow faint. I went through that room and two others to the garret stairs. I hardly breathed. I heard a window pushed up; more than one person came in at it. I felt about me in the dark. There was a sliding panel in the inside of the stairway. I pushed it, and it rolled back. I entered into a long closet under the stairs, and slid the panel carefully into its place. I felt cautiously to see if all was safe. I pulled my dress close about me lest it might be caught, and the door not closed tight. Then I waited. I heard steps coming up the stairs. I heard a search through all the rooms below. My heart beat till I thought that each bound must be audible. I heard voices—one voice, the Raven's. I knew that harsh croak. It told me nothing. The face had revealed all to me. The man had seen the bag of gold as he leaned over the wall in the morning, unnoticed by the gay group. It was all plain to me. He had gathered from the girls' talk that I might be alone. He had returned and watched. He had brought accomplices.

Very soon the steps and voices came my way. I could distinguish the words that were spoken.

"Drat her! she must have seen you."

"No matter; we'll split the box open with this axe."

I knew the axe was in the little porch. Thomas had set it in when he had done chopping the brush, as it looked like rain.

I heard the steps and voices move away, a dull, crashing sound, and then stifled, angry tones. I knew they had opened the box, and found nothing but the papers. I knew they would now search for me.

I heard them as they looked into every room and closet, and came up the stairs separate. They all met at the foot of the garret stairs. A thin board was between us. I thanked God that the panel was close shut. I knew it, for no ray of light came through.

"She must be up here," said the Raven, "and we'll soon have her."

"I'll warrant she is here, and I'll wring her neck if she makes a noise about it."

But the thorough search was ended, and the voices grew very angry and full of frightful oaths and threatenings.

They sat down on the garret stairs to hold a parley. A spider ran across my face. A spider puts me in mortal fear. It was almost a superhuman effort that kept me from screaming.

"Come" croaked the Raven, "let us go and get the silver; that will be something—that will be something."

"Curse the silver. It's the gold I've come for, and I'll burn the house if I don't find the girl. So let her look out."

A cold perspiration came on my forehead. Would they perform their threat?

"Good! Then the rats will squeak—Down drop the money bags, and we'll choke the girl to make her dumb."

"Hold you noise. The old man will be coming home. We'll be caught here. Be quick."

"Who cares for him! He's only one. A bludgeon will give him a handy little headache as he comes in."

"And his wife?"

They spoke low, hideous words that made my flesh creep! I almost was ready to call aloud, to open the panel, to give them the gold, and bid them go.

They got up, and the steps and voices went down. It was horrible there in the dark. I was stifling.

I moved the panel slightly. No light entered. I slid it softly back. My resolution was taken.

I would get out of the house, run down the road, and meet my father. I would save him.

I left the gold in the closet, shutting it in close. I stole down two steps into the chamber below. I knew there was a window open there. I crept across the room, listening keenly.

I lifted myself cautiously on the window ledge, and caught a branch of the cherry-tree which grew close to the house.

Swinging myself lightly out, I hastily descended the trunk of the tree, and found myself on the ground safe.

No. The lightning flash betrayed me. The Raven's voice shrieked hoarsely, "There she goes! Catch her! Quick! This way!"

Out at the front door came the pursuers, hardly ten steps from me.

I dashed towards the thick shrubbery to put them off the track.

Fortunately I knew the way, every step of it. They were guided solely by the sound and the flashing light.

"Shoot her by the next flash!" cried one.

My flying feet struck loose boards.

I was passing directly over an old, unused well, very deep, and it gave back a hollow, resonant sound. Almost the next moment I heard a crash, the report of a pistol, a heavy fall, oaths, and a deep groan.

Shuddering, I sped on through the garden, up towards the cider-press, over the stone-wall, down the hollow, up the hill side, over the fields.

Four steps followed; no voices shouted after me. I ran down to the second bars, and let them down.

It began to rain a few great drops, then fast, then it poured. I was wet to the skin.

I ran on, for I heard advancing wheels coming rapidly. I stood in the road and cried "Father! father!"

The chaise stopped. Another chaise behind stopped also.

It was our next neighbour's, who lived a quarter of a mile further on.

"Ann, my child. Good heavens! What is the matter? What has happened?"

I told the whole in a few words, amid eager exclamations of joy at my safety, of surprise, even of anger because Thomas had left me alone.

"Don't blame him, father; I insisted on his going."

A hurried consultation took place.

My father was very brave. Our neighbour was rather timid. He proposed going on to his house, and returning with weapons.

In the meantime I had got into the chaise and crouched down at my mother's feet, who was half crying, and wholly thankful to feel me there.

We rode on, and came to our gate under the willows. There were lights in the house, but all seemed still. Nothing moved. My father put the reins in my mother's hands, and opened the other gate that led up the lane.

"Will you go home with Nathan?" said he.

"And leave you here? No."

"Take your wife home, Nathan, if you will, and come back."

"We will stay by you."

"Let us reconnoitre them a little."

They got out, leaving us sitting still. The rain fell less heavily. They got something that would do for weapons from the tool-house. They went all round the house—all was quiet. They went in.

We sat still, speaking few words, my hand clasped in my mother's.

"Thomas is coming!" I exclaimed, eagerly. "I hear the wheels."

We called to him as he came to the gate, for he could not see us.

He drove through, and called out—"What is the matter?"

We told him sufficient, and he left Betsey and Hannah, and went it at once, with only the heavy whip.

We did not sit long. Nathan came out directly.

"What have you found? Who is there?"

"Nothing. Nobody."

"Are they all gone?"

"Yes, with some of the silver, and a few things. We don't know what yet."

The horses were put under the shed, and we all went in.

My father said, calmly:

"We will take a lantern, Thomas, and look round out of doors a little."

I knew they would go to the old well. I stood and looked out of the window, and saw the gleam of the lantern as it moved.

It was a very few minutes they came back.

"One of them is dead," said my father, "and the other lies at the bottom of the well, and groans. The third has escaped."

They laid boards across some barrels in the shed, and brought up the dead man and laid him on them.

His comrade, who fell in the well, had shot him in the head as he plunged through the boards. His ugly face was still uglier.

It was the Raven.

That night my father's prayers were very solemn, and his embrace was close as he gave me my good-night kiss.

The robber in the well was bruised, but not seriously hurt. The law took him to punishment.

The third escaped to America, and afterwards roamed.

I was never left at home again alone.

A GERMAN professes to have counted the hairs on the heads of four women of different complexions, and has just published the results. On the head of the blonde there were 140,419 hairs; on that of the brown-haired woman, 109,440; on that of the black-haired, 102,362; and on that of the red-haired, 83,740. Although there was this disparity in the number of individual hairs, each crop was about the same weight. The average weight of a woman's hair is stated, on the same authority, to be fourteen ounces.

A ROMANTIC CAREER.

A VERY curious case has just been decided by the Imperial Court of Paris. An old lady named Maria Christowich died in the hospital of La Charité, in Paris, in December, 1861, in the seventy-ninth year of her age. Her history is worthy of narration.

Maria Christowich, born in Ragusa in 1782, was in 1806 a very handsome young woman, possessing regular features, fine brown eyes, and hair as black as jet. Having attracted the attention of a young French officer, he carried her off to Grand Cairo, where he held a high position, and they lived there together in great splendour for many years.

Maria Christowich related subsequently that she came to Paris with the officer, and that she was presented by him as his wife to Louis XVIII. During her stay in Paris, previous to her return to Cairo, her existence was a brilliant one.

After a residence of several years in Cairo, the officer to whom she had united her fortunes died, and she was left with comparatively small means. She then quitted Egypt and came to France.

She lived for a long time respectably in Paris, but the failure of a banking house deprived her of the greater part of her fortune, and she was reduced to live on the rent she received from a house in Cairo, producing £80 a year.

From that day Maria Christowich became avaricious and mistrustful. She removed to a low, damp lodging on the ground floor of a house in the Rue d'Argenteuil, for which she paid 150 francs (£6) a year.

She might have lodged herself better and lived more comfortably, but the loss of her money inspired her with such a fear of being reduced to a state of mendicity that, in order to increase her means, she imposed a thousand unnecessary privations upon herself.

Forgetting her former luxurious habits and elegance of dress, she lived voluntarily in a state of extreme destitution, with all the appearance of abject poverty. She died almost of starvation, and nevertheless the agent of the missionaries in the Holy Land paid her annually two thousand francs in the presence of one of the priests of St. Roche, her parish.

Toward the end of the year 1861, the priest was informed that Maria Christowich had not been seen for several days.

He proceeded to her lodgings, knocked at the door, and heard a weak groan. The commissioner of police ordered the door to be broken open, and the wretched old woman was found lying on the ground in her night-dress, the weather being at the time excessively cold.

She was conveyed to the hospital of La Charité, where, notwithstanding all the efforts made to save her, she died on the second day, the 22nd of December, 1861.

The day of her death the Abbé René apprised the agent of the missionaries of the fact. She had received from him two thousand francs a few days previously, being a year's rent of the house in Cairo.

The agent proceeded to her lodgings, hoping to find a will there, as Maria Christowich had frequently expressed her determination to leave all she possessed to the missionaries in the Holy Land.

An inventory was taken by a notary in the presence of the Austrian consul, who attended on the part of heirs residing at Ragusa, and in the trunk of the old woman, who was in the habit of soliciting alms from the priests of St. Roche, was found a sum of 25,000 francs (£1,000) in gold and government securities. This cash was handed over to the notary, who was appointed provisional trustee.

As there was no will discovered, the agent of the missionaries withdrew, leaving the affair to be decided between the Austrian consul and the French Government officers, who laid claim to the property.

After a long litigation, the heirs of Maria Christowich established their right before the tribunal of Ragusa, and the judgment of that tribunal has been confirmed by the Imperial Court of Paris, and the money ordered to be handed over to the heirs.

VALUE OF AMUSEMENTS.—The world must be amused. It is entirely false reasoning to suppose that any human being can devote himself exclusively to labour of any description. It will not do. Rest alone will not give him adequate relief. He must be

amused. He must enjoy himself. He must laugh, sing, dance, eat, drink and be merry. He must chat with his friends, exercise his mind in exciting gentle emotions, and his body in agreeable demonstrations of activity. The constitution of the human system demands this. It exacts a variety of influences and emotions. It will not remain in health if it cannot obtain that variety. Too much merriment affects it as injuriously as too much sadness, too much relaxation is as pernicious as none at all. But to the industrious toiler the sunshine of the heart is just as indispensable as the material sunshine is to the flower; both soon pine away and die if deprived of it.

SCIENCE.

COPPER MINES IN NEW SOUTH WALES.—The reports from these mines continue to be of a satisfactory character. The quality of ore is improving, and the lodes are more productive as depth is obtained.

TESTING OF SULPHIDE OR POTASSIUM.—Sulphide of potassium is estimated in the same way as sulphide of sodium. But instead of using in the preparation of the standard solution of copper 9.737 gr. of pure copper, only 6.880 gr. should be employed.

INTERESTING EXPERIMENTS UPON THE AURORAL CURRENT.

In the month of August, 1859, the beautiful phenomenon of the aurora borealis excited wonder and admiration in the minds of the people, both from the grandeur of the display and its effects upon the magnetic needle, particularly the electro-magnetic needle, with the coil of wire in the circuit of a telegraph line.

In addition to the experiments made with the galvanometer at that time, several telegraph lines were worked, messages transmitted, &c., without the aid of artificial electricity, the aurora borealis assuming the entire duty of the usual batteries, and although the work was not performed as well as it might have been done with our usual battery power, without the aid or interference of the auroral current, yet it was a great satisfaction to many wonder-stricken telegraphers who had never seen the like before.

Many of the effects of the phenomenon and accounts of experiments made upon telegraph lines were placed on record at that time, some of which were also published in works on electricity. As the effect of the auroral current of Thursday, August 3, 1865, upon the electro-magnetic needle and telegraphic instruments differed considerably from that of August, 1859, we wish to place on record, for comparison with the previous experiments and for future reference, the result of comparatively rude observations.

Although the auroral current was undoubtedly as powerful as that of August, 1859, it was observed that our wires were not so greatly disturbed by fluctuations (with our usual batteries on duty), but rather showed a weakness of currents, as though the batteries were not in proper working condition, while the effect in August, 1859, was to alternately and continually augment and decrease our battery currents, in consequence of the continual reversing of the polarity of the auroral current, thus making it exceedingly difficult to keep the instruments adjusted for the currents, and rendering for a while lines almost useless.

In our experiments on the 3rd instant we found, after removing the batteries, quite a powerful and steady current, each wave of which appeared of much longer duration, and the increasing and decreasing of the current more gradual, than was observed in August, 1859. But the most remarkable effect shown in our recent experiments with the galvanometer, was the almost entire absence of the changes of polarity, which were very marked in the experiments of 1859, each wave having been almost invariably succeeded by a wave of opposite polarity.

In the experiments of the 3rd instant, the positive polarity of the auroral currents was almost invariably west during the observations, which is the reverse of the usual battery currents on the Western wires, thus accounting for the weakness of currents observed previous to the experiments—as the two currents, being generally opposed, were partly neutralized.

The following observations of the needle will roughly show the power, constancy, and polarity of the auroral current during the fifty minutes occupied by the experiments:—

The batteries having been removed and the galvanometer placed in the circuit of the wire at twelve hours fifty-one minutes P.M., a deflection of 3 deg. east was observed, the needle at the time gradually ascending. It should be remarked that a deflection in the needle east in this instance simply shows the polarity of the auroral current to have been the reverse of the usual battery current.

After a comparatively steady upward movement of

three minutes duration, with an occasional check or slight downward movement (a characteristic observable throughout the experiments), the needle remained stationary at 44 deg. deflection, but for only a few seconds, having descended rapidly to zero in the succeeding thirty seconds.

After remaining quietly at zero one minute, another ascent was commenced east, stopping at 28 deg. at twelve hours fifty-seven minutes thirty seconds, the duration of that ascent having been two minutes. Remaining at 28 deg. one minute, it descended to zero in one minute and thirty seconds, but immediately commenced another ascent in the same direction, reaching 60 deg. at one hour three minutes, this ascent occupying three minutes. The needle remained steady at 60 deg. for three minutes, when, during the succeeding minute, it ascended to 70 deg. and returned to 67 deg., where it remained two minutes. During the next succeeding minute it ascended to 72 deg., descended to 65 deg., and again ascended to

72 deg. two minutes, it commenced

descent occupying one minute, and remaining stationary at 38 deg. for thirty seconds, when it rapidly descended to zero, as if the current had been suddenly removed. Remaining at zero thirty seconds, another ascent was commenced east, reaching 50 deg. in one hour and sixteen minutes. During the succeeding minute the needle descended to zero, ascended three degrees met and returned to zero. After remaining at zero one minute, an ascent west was commenced at one hour and eighteen minutes, reaching 34 deg. in thirty seconds. Remaining at 34 deg. one minute, it rapidly descended, as though the entire current had been suddenly removed.

The needle then remained stationary at zero until one hour and twenty-six minutes, when it ascended five degrees east and remained between that and zero until one hour and thirty-three minutes, when it stood perfectly quiet at zero until one hour and forty minutes, at which time the observations were discontinued.

BOILER-TESTING APPARATUS.—Messrs. J. Bailey and Co., Albion Works, Salford, have recently produced a very neat and compact portable apparatus for testing boilers. It consists of a suitable pump fitted in a tank, and connected with a good gauge for indicating the pressure. Such an arrangement has been long wanted, and we have no doubt that Messrs. Bailey's invention will be found exceedingly serviceable—the rather that it is sold at a moderate price.

How warm is the water at the North Pole was the theme of discussion at a late meeting of the Royal Geological Society of London. Mr. Hickson, who began the debate, had no doubt of the existence of an open sea under the Pole, and Sir Roderick Murchison agreed with him. The opinion that temperature becomes warmer on approaching the Pole was, he said, to some degree confirmed by the temperature at the extreme north of Siberia, which was warmer than it was farther south.

EGYPTIAN KOHL.—The kohl, or kheul, which we have seen in use for darkening the eyelids since the time of the ancient Egyptians, is made by the Arabs in the following way:—They remove the inside of a lemon, fill it up with plumbago and burn copper, and place it on the fire until it becomes carbonised; then they pound it in a mortar with coral, sandal-wood, pearls, ambergris, the wing of a bat, and part of the body of a chameleon, the whole having been previously burnt to a cinder, and moistened with rose-water whilst hot.

NEW GALL INSECT.—Mr. W. Couper has recently described a parasite on the common creeping ryegrass. It belongs to the hymenoptera or bee order of insects. As soon as the larva issues from the egg it places its head downwards in the gall, remaining in that position till it eats its way through. About the end of September it ceases to feed, and prepares to meet a Canadian winter. By this time the gall is hardened, and the larva remains in a torpid state, becoming active again in the spring, and changing to perfect insects in time to attack the young grass of the season. Baron Sacken regards it as belonging to the genus *Eurytoma*.

WATER POWER IN WAREHOUSES.—Mr. Pierce, of Bradford, has adopted another very ingenious arrangement in the shape of a water-engine, which was put down by Messrs. Ramsbottom and Co., of Blackburn. The engine is supplied with water from the corporation mains on a pressure of 60 lb. or 70 lb. to the square inch. The water enters a pair of water-engines, each of which possesses a pair of oscillating cylinders, causing a continuous rotary motion, which puts the hoist in action. The engine has been applied with success to printing machines, to a mortar-grinding machine, and other apparatus requiring a motive power on a small scale. The experiments made on this occasion were quite satisfactory. The hoisting of three sheets of wool or tops, each weighing about

five cwt., did not occupy more than seven minutes, and the quantity of water consumed in the process was about 120 gallons. A series of experiments followed, and including the sheets raised in the first experiment, no fewer fifteen sheets of wool, weighing in the aggregate 3 tons 15 cwt., were raised from the ground floor to the highest storey of the warehouse in the short space of forty-five minutes. The entire quantity of water consumed was only 570 gallons, the cost of which was about 6d.

THE "CRIB" FOR THE CHICAGO LAKE TUNNEL.

The walls of the crib are constructed of blocks of logs, hewn square, and one foot in thickness. The distance between the walls is 11ft., leaving with the inner wall a pentagonal enclosure, comprising an inscribed crib of 25ft. in diameter. The crib is barred so thoroughly that it might be tumbled over without injury. It contains 750,000ft. of lumber, hand measure, and about 150,000 lb. of iron bolts, making in all about 1,800 tons weight.

The outside wall was thoroughly caulked, equal to a first-class vessel, and over it was placed a layer of lagging, to keep the caulking in place and protect the crib from the action of the waves. It will stand about 7ft. above the water-line, and 5ft. will be built above.

The centre of the crib is a large hollow space, into which a huge cylinder of cast iron, 9ft. in diameter, will be lowered in sections about 10ft. in length. The lower section will have a chisel edge to cut through the soil. The joists are water-tight, with broad flanges turned true and grooved so as to take in a ridge of cement. The cylinder will pierce the clay to the total depth of 64ft. from the surface of the water.

After reaching the bed of the lake, the top will be covered with a plate of iron, and the tube exhausted by means of an air pump; the pressure of the atmosphere outside will force the piece into the ground, the air will then be admitted, another piece lowered to it, and the same process repeated; this will be continued till the entire cylinder is fixed.

When this is done, all will be ready for the workmen to descend into the tube of the cylinder and proceed to excavating. The water will be pumped out and the workmen will then begin to excavate, striking out to meet those at the other extremity.

It is considered to be certain that the engineers have made their calculations so accurately, that the party of workmen excavating from the way of the crib will in about a year meet those at work on the present tube, and the walls of the tunnel exactly fit together. It is intended, when the tunnel shall have been completed, to let in the water through the sluices in the walls of the crib.

At this point the water is very pure and clear. It has never been found to contain more than eight grains of solid matter to the gallon; and the distance from shore, two miles, is so far that storms will not affect its quality. The north-western current in the lake will carry away the filth emptied into the lake round the head and to the Michigan shore. The tunnel ascends or slopes, as it goes out from the shore, about two feet per mile.

Many apprehend that the pressure of the water on its first entrance will sweep away the brickwork and collapse the walls; but as the bricks are set into the clay, which is almost as firm as solid rock, and the internal pressure of water will be equivalent to that from the outside, this is hardly to be feared. If nothing occurs to interrupt the completion of the tunnel, or to destroy it when finished, Chicago will have secured an inexhaustible supply of as pure and wholesome water as is to be found on the western continent.

A MINIATURE STEAM ENGINE.—One of the most curious articles of the Wakefield Exhibition is perhaps, a steam engine and boiler in miniature, and described as the "smallest steam engine in the world." It stands scarcely two inches in height, and is covered with a glass shade. The flywheel is made of gold, with steel arms, and makes 7,000 revolutions per minute. The whole engine and boiler is fastened together with 38 screws and bolts, the whole weighing 14 grains, or under one quarter of an ounce. The manufacturer says of it, that the evaporation of six drops of water will drive the engine eight minutes. This dwarf piece of mechanism is designed and made by a clock manufacturer at Horsforth.

THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH NEARLY EIGHT YEARS AGO.—The following passage occurs in "Arthur Young's Travels in France," published in Dublin in 1798. The date of the letter from which the extract is taken is Oct. 16, 1787:—"in the evening to Monsieur Lomond, a very ingenious and inventive mechanic, who has made an improvement in the jenny for spinning cotton. . . . In electricity he has made a remarkable discovery. You write two or three words on paper; he takes it with him into a room, and turns a machine inclosed in a cylindrical case, at the top of

which is an electrometer, a small fine pith ball, a wire connects with a cylinder and electrometer in a distant apartment, and his wife, by remarking the corresponding motions of the ball, writes down the words they indicate, from which it appears that he has formed an alphabet of motions. As the form of the wire makes no difference in the effect, the correspondence may be carried on to any distance within or without a fortified town, for instance, or for purposes much more worthy. Whatever the use may be, the invention is beautiful."

PREHISTORIC MAN.—Mr. Milne Edwards communicated to the last meeting of the French Academy of Sciences a letter from M. Lariset, on the discovery of a curiously-engraved fragment of ivory found in one of the caverns of Périgord. The piece of ivory was discovered in several fragments which, when put together, showed a roughly-engraved figure of a mammoth, its most remarkable characteristic being a long mane, which feature at once recalled the celebrated Siberian elephant, so entirely preserved by ice. Although this rude drawing may or may not have been made by some one contemporary with the mammoth (most probably it was), yet it can hardly deepen the conviction of those who believe in the co-existence of man with the elephant *primigenius*.

MAGNESIUM.—A few years ago, magnesium was worth £10 an ounce; now it can be bought at six shillings an ounce, so greatly has the cost of its manufacture been cheapened; and it is now produced as valves and screw-tubes of considerable size and thickness, as well as in the form of wire. It is also highly useful for illuminating purposes, and experiments have been made with a view to its adoption for street lighting, instead of gas. Of its brilliance there is no question; it throws gas on all ordinary lights into a shadow. A company in Rio Janeiro, where gas is sold at £25 the thousand feet, wrote not long ago to the secretary of a scientific society in London, to ask whether magnesium could not be afforded at less cost. The inventive faculty is so lively at the present day, that it is not impossible a satisfactory answer may be given before the world is many years older.

In Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia there are 32 submarine cables, which are of the aggregate length of 5,625 miles, and the insulated wires of which measure 9,783 miles. The longest of these is 1,550 fathoms, and the shortest 13 fathoms. There are 95 submarine cables in the United States and British North America, which measure 68 miles, and their insulated wires 133 miles. The overland telegraph line between New York and the west coast of Ireland, through British Columbia, Northern Asia, and Russia, will be 20,479 miles long, 12,740 miles of which are completed. It has at length been resolved that this line shall cross from America to Asia at the southern point of Norton Sound, on the American side to St. Lawrence Island and from thence to Cape Thadœus on the Asiatic continent. Two submarine cables will be required for this, one 135 miles long and the other 260 miles long. Cape Thadœus is 1,700 miles from the mouth of the Amoor river.

In addition to the duties noticed by us as performed by the lithographer engaged on board the Great Eastern during the recent cable expedition, it appears that he was still further useful in transferring to stone an interesting map, drawn by Staff-Commander Moriarty, of the course and position of the Great Eastern when trying to recover the lost end of the cable. From this is seen with great clearness the precise whereabouts of the ship every hour or so during her drifting search; where the first buoy was placed on August 4; where the second buoy after the rope broke on August 8; where the cable was first lifted on August 3; where the second lift was on August 8; and where the third lift when the rope broke on August 11. Many other interesting particulars are given, and from the cheapness, convenience, and rapidity with which these things were done, it is to be inferred that a lithographic artist will henceforth be considered an indispensable ally on all similar expeditions.

ALLEGED DISCOVERY OF A PETROLEUM SPRING AT BLAIRGOWRIE.—A discovery was made on September 2nd, which has rather startled this neighbourhood, the discoverer being one of the many health-seekers at present enjoying the invigorating breezes of this romantic district. A gentleman who returned a few months ago from the oil-springs of America, while enjoying a walk along the hill-side above Blairgowrie, known as the 'Cleugh Wells,' discovered a petroleum spring about fifty yards to the west of the well-known mineral well. At first the report was believed by many to be a hoax, but within a few hours the place was visited by great numbers, and the most credulous were convinced in the evening by seeing the premises of Mr. Grant, druggist, and Mr. Davis, ironmonger, brilliantly lighted up with the fluid obtained from the

spring. The light is exceedingly pure and bright, and by the appearance of the spring the supply seems to be abundant. Already speculation has commenced, for we hear of large offers having been made, but as yet none of them have been accepted.

THE HISTORY OF POTHOOKS.—In the last century, the original Crawshay, then a farmer's son, rode to London on his pony (his sole property) to seek his fortune. He began by sweeping out the warehouse of an ironmonger, who was of a discriminating mind, and saw that young Crawshay had good stuff in him. The ironmonger had been speculating successfully in sending out iron pots to America, and his astute apprentice observed that if the Americans used so many pots they must want hooks to hang them on. Whereupon his master not only took the hint, but kindly determined that Crawshay should send them out, and that he would lend him the money for the purpose. Upon this venture £100 was realised, and from that time the farmer's son moved rapidly upwards, being first taken into partnership by his master, and ultimately becoming an iron king in South Wales. It is curious that from this stock have arisen (in so short a time) two baronetcies and one peerage, that of Llanover.

CHINESE SUGAR.—Much extra ground has been set apart at Swatow this year for the cultivation of sugar, in consequence of the demand in the north of China for this product. The Chinese mode of pressing sugar is most rude. The cane is passed between two perpendicular granite cylinders—one, being turned by oxen, gives a motion to the others by means of coggs cut in the granite, and shod with hard wood; the juice is thus expelled, and runs through a channel cut for that purpose into a large wooden tub, from which it is removed to the boiling-hut closely adjoining. These cylinders are not at all firmly fixed, depending altogether upon their weight to keep them in position. A company of Europeans working a modern sugar mill might make a large profit, if the Chinese would consent to sell their crops when ready for cutting. An improved cane mill was imported by an English firm, but the natives refused to purchase or even try it. A fact not to be wondered at when we find people take a pride in defying all change.

A CHURCH has been built at Argenteuil, a village near Paris, to replace an old one, in which "for centuries was kept the robe without seam, of Christ," and the robe is to be deposited in the new edifice for the veneration of the faithful. A few days back the newspapers stated that at Treves, on the Rhine, the "holy coat without seam" is to be exhibited this year in the church to which it has belonged for centuries. Which of these two garments is to be accepted as authentic? Really the bigwigs of the Roman Church ought to come to some understanding in the matter, for it is scandalous that two seamless vestments should be shown when it is known to all the world that there was only one.

DEAFNESS.—We mentioned a few months ago Dr. Turnbull's extraordinary success in curing deafness; and we now have a confirmation of that fact from the mouth of the distinguished lecturer, the Abbé Moigno, who, at one of his late sittings, stated that the learned doctor had cured several persons deaf and dumb from their birth. The patient is made to stop both his ears; Dr. Turnbull then places his watch on the subject's forehead, and if the ticking is heard, he thereby argues that the nerve is not paralyzed, and that his method of cure may succeed. He then pours a neutral liquid of his own composition into the ear, and a few minutes after the spectators are surprised to find that the patient can hear. From that moment the cure commences, and is almost always crowned with success.

DREAMS.—When Doctor Harvey, one of the Physicians of College in London (says Aubrey), being a young man, went to travel towards Padua, he went to Dover, with several others, and showed his pass, as the rest did, to the governor there. The governor told him that he must not go, but he must keep him prisoner. The doctor desired to know "what for reason? how had he transgressed?" "Well, it was his will to have it so." The packet-boat hoisted sail in the evening, which was very clear, and the doctor's companions in it. There ensued a terrible storm, and the packet-boat and all the passengers went down. The next day the sad news was brought to Dover. The doctor was unknown to the governor, both by name and face; but the night before the governor had a perfect vision in a dream of Dr. Harvey, who came to pass over to Calais, and that he had a warning to stop him. This the governor told to the doctor the next day. The doctor was a pious, good man, and has several times related this story to some of my acquaintance. My Lady Seymour dreamed that she saw a nest with nine finches in it. And so many children she had by the Earl of Win-

chesla, whose name is Finch. The Countess of Cork (now Burlington) being at Dublin, dreamed that her father, the Earl of Cumberland, who was then at York, was dead. He died at that time. The most curious of these stories is one which Aubrey says was told him by William Penn. The English fleet was then at sea, fighting against the Dutch. Sir William Penn, the great admiral, was on board, though the chief command was in the hands of the three sea-generals, Blake, Deane, and Monk. Lady Penn took her son William to pay a visit to Mrs. Deane, the sea-general's wife, who at that time resided in Petty France, and on the ladies falling into talk about the fleet, Mrs. Deane told her visitors that she had been troubled by a dream, in which she saw her husband walking on the deck, when a cannon-shot struck his arm and drove it into his side. Within forty-eight hours, says Aubrey, she received news of a great battle, in which her husband was certainly killed in the manner which she had seen in her vision.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

DIARRHœA CURED BY A SIMPLE PROCESS.—Lawson, a Swede, who has been several years in the army, and, having been wounded, is now attending the work in the hospital, wishes us to say that he has cured numerous cases of diarrhœa by a simple tea of blackberry roots. We can fully endorse this remedy, and it is within easy reach of many.

THE TOMATO AS FOOD.

A good medical authority ascribes to the tomato the following very important medical qualities:

1st. That the tomato is one of the most powerful aperients of the liver and other organs; where calomel is indicated, it is one of the most effective and the least harmful medical agents known to the profession.

2nd. That a chemical extract will be obtained from it that will supersede the use of calomel in the cure of disease.

3rd. That he has successfully treated diarrhœa with this article alone.

4th. That when used as an article of diet, it is almost sovereign for dyspepsia and indigestion.

5th. That it should be constantly used for daily food. Either cooked or raw, or in the form of catsup, it is the most healthy article now in use.

TOMATO SAUCE.—Gather the tomatoes quite ripe, bake them in a slow oven till tender; rub them through a sieve, and to every three dozen tomatoes, or 3lb. of pulp, allow one pint of Chili vinegar, half a teaspoonful of cayenne, 2 oz. of salt, one pint of common vinegar, and the juice of six lemons, and boil together for twenty minutes; bottle off for use, and carefully seal or resin the corks. This will keep good for two or three years.

TO ALLY INFLAMMATION.—A correspondent says: A young lady, whilst in the country some years ago, stepped on a rusty nail, which ran through her shoe and foot. The inflammation and pain were of course very great, and lockjaw apprehended. A friend of the family, however, recommended the application of a beet taken fresh from the garden and pounded fine, to the wound. It was done, and the effect was very beneficial. Soon the inflammation began to subside, and by keeping on the crushed beet, and changing it for a fresh one, as its virtue seemed to become impaired, a speedy cure was effected.

TO MAKE BLACKBERRY WINE.—There is no wine equal to blackberry, when it is properly made. In flavour, and for medicinal purposes, it cannot be excelled. All persons who can conveniently do so, should manufacture enough for their own use, as it is invaluable in sickness. Measure your berries and bruise them; to every gallon add one quart of boiling water. Let the mixture stand twenty-four hours, stirring occasionally; then strain off the liquor into a cask; to every gallon add two pounds of nice, clean sugar; cork tight and let it stand until the following October, and you will have wine ready for use, without further straining or boiling, that will make lips smack that never smacked under similar influences before.

RESCUE AND INGRATITUDE.—A young man, M. T., of Liege, who was at the watering-place of Blankenberge, saw two young German ladies on the point of drowning. He swam to their rescue and was seized by them. At times he was compelled to break from them in order to save himself from total destruction; the girls sank again and again under the water. He, however, as often raised them to the surface. The fearful struggle being observed from the shore by thousands of persons, two of the *garde des bains* jumped into a boat and rowed out to the help of the drowning party. Not a moment was to be lost, for the whole three were almost exhausted by their frantic

efforts to keep themselves above the waves. They were dragged at length into the boat, one of the young ladies having fainted away, whilst the other was for a time apparently insensible and powerless. M. T.—, however, was the worst of the entire party, unconscious of every one around him, and torn by the efforts of the two young females to cling to him. The young ladies were soon recovered. Not so their gallant rescuer, whose strength was entirely exhausted, and who was suffering in addition from the quantity of salt water he had swallowed. On the very evening of the day of this accident, and while M. T.— was lying prostrate in the utmost danger of his death, in consequence of his generous devotion to save the lives of others, the two young ladies whom he had saved were observed to promenade the *digue* amidst a numerous company, and to make themselves particularly remarkable by their boisterous gaiety and their romping behaviour.

FACETIE.

WHY is the early grass like a penknife?—Because the spring brings out the blades.

A ROMANTIC young man says that a young woman's heart is like the moon—it changes continually, but always has a man in it.

If one-half the people knew what the other half said about them, friendship would be entirely unknown.

"I HAVEN'T another word to say, sir; I never dispute with fools." "No," was the reply, "you are sure to agree with them."

"PAPA, why do they plant guns? Do they grow and have leaves?"—"No, my son; but like plants they shoot, and then others do the leaving."

A HAPPY FATHER.—*Sympathizing Friend*.—"My dear sir, allow me to offer my warm congratulations. This, I believe, is the third pair of twins!"

A BEGGING letter, lately addressed to the Emperor Napoleon, began, "Sire, I received, under your late uncle, two mortal wounds—one at Wagram, the other in the leg."

AN ERROR.—"Off she goes!" said Mr. Smith to his spouse, as they started by the railway from London bridge. "You are wrong," said Mrs. Smith, "for this is the 'mail' train."

A FRIEND of an artist was endeavouring to persuade him not to bestow so much time on his works. "You do not know, then," said he, "I have a master very difficult to please!" "Who?" "Myself."

NOT BY THE "LONDON CONUNDRUM SOCIETY."—Why do cricketers sleep less apparently than other men?—Because, though they go to bed after the "lark," they are subsequently afield with the "bat."

"REPRESENT me in my portrait," said a gentleman to his painter, "with a book in my hand and reading aloud. Paint my servant also, in a corner where he cannot be seen, but in such a manner that he may hear me when I call him."

A MILKMAN was arrested in Paris the other day for putting water in his milk. He was seen by the police pouring something into his pails; but in defence, he insisted that it was a liquid called the *conservateur*, for keeping the milk fresh in the hot weather.

"WHICH, my dear lady, do you think the merriest place in the world?"—"That immediately above the atmosphere that surrounds the earth, I should think."—"And why so?"—"Because I am told that there all bodies lose their gravity."

THE REV. Mr. Johnston was one of those rough but quaint preachers of the former generation who were fond of visiting and good living. While seated at the table of a good lady in a neighbouring parish, she asked him if he took milk in his tea. "Yes ma'am, when I can't get cream," was the ready reply.

"WHY, father should I always look out for No. 1?" asked a young man, who was being subjected to parental advice, of which looking out for No. 1 was the principal burden. "Because, my son," replied the philosophical parent, "No. 1 is the only figure that will ever enable you to 'eat a figure' in this world."

A FRIEND of mine has a wife who inflicts upon him every season two or three immense evening parties. At one of those parties he was standing in a very forlorn condition, leaning against the chimney-piece, when a gentleman, coming up to him, said: "Sir, as neither of us are acquainted here, I think we had better go home!"

TRICKS OF THE TELEGRAPH.—A curious volume might be written of the "Tricks of the Telegraph." A few days ago it was known that the Empress, on her way from Switzerland to Fontainebleau, accepted a dinner offered her by the wife of the Sub-Prefect of

Pontarlier. Empresses do not habitually seat themselves at the hospitable board of sub-prefectesses, and people were rather surprised; but still, such concession was not impossible, and so the incident passed unnoticed. It now proves to have been that telegraph at its old tricks. The Empress was offered and gracefully accepted a *bouquet*. This wires altered into *banquet*, and the pen into dinner.

GENUINE ELOQUENCE.

There are no people in the world with whom eloquence is so universal as with the Irish. When Leigh Ritchie was travelling in Ireland, he passed a man who was a painful spectacle of palor, squalor, and raggedness.

His heart smote him, and he turned back.

"If you are in want," said Ritchie, "why don't you beg?"

"Surely, it's begging I am, yer honour."

"You didn't say a word."

"Of course not, yer honour, but see how the skin is spiking through the holes in my trousers! and the bones cryin' out through me skin! Look at me sunken cheeks, and the famine that's staring in me eyes! Man alive, isn't it begging I am with a thousand tongues!"

NAUDIN, who is always agitating for something lighter than air with which to float, has been recommended a young man who is assuredly lighter than air, and has succeeded in floating hills of exchange for £4,000. The whole went to a young actress, for the honour of her acquaintance for one day, says scandal. But the case will come before the courts of law.

CARELESSNESS IN DRESS.—I never knew but one good excuse for carelessness in dress—that of the Bristol merchant, who, on being accused in London of walking about with a hole in his boot, exclaimed, "Oh! no one knows me here." But, on his friend going down to Bristol and meeting him still in the same boot, and drawing his attention to the fact, the reply was of an opposite nature, but equally satisfactory—"Ah! my dear friend, it matters not a straw; every one knows me here."

AN INTOLERABLE INDIGNITY.—A medical man who had just returned from setting the broken leg of an Arab gave the following anecdote:—"The patient," said the doctor, "complained more of the accident which had befallen him than I thought becoming one of his tribe. This I remarked to him, and his answer was truly amusing. 'Do not think, doctor, I should have uttered one word of complaint if my own high bred colt, in a playful kick, had broken both my legs; but to have a bone broken by a brute of a donkey is too bad, and I will complain.'"

SPORTIVE JEST.

"A boat-race like this," quoth the cynic, gazing at the Harvard Regatta, "always puts me in mind of a wounded lion."

"Ah, pray how?" asked Mary Jane, timidly.

"By its great rowers," replied the cynic.

Mary Jane fainted slightly.

A HIGHLANDER who sold brooms went into a barber's shop in Glasgow to get shaved. The barber bought one of his brooms, and after having shaved him, asked him the price of it. "Tippence," said the Highlander. "Oo, oo," said the shaver, "I'll give you a penny, and if that does not satisfy you, take your broom again." The Highlander took the penny, and asked what he had to pay. "A penny," says strap. "I'll git ye a bawbee," says Duncan, "and if that dinna satisfy ye, put on my beard again!"

A RAILWAY DIRECTOR'S VISIT OF INSPECTION.—A "little bird," whose information is generally reliable, has recently visited the railway works at Andoverford, and tell us of a circumstance which, he thinks, may prove interesting to ourselves and our readers. A certain clerical director of the East Gloucestershire, who lives less than a hundred miles from Withington, dissatisfied with the oral evidence he received, determined to pay a personal visit of inspection to the works, and carried out his determination on the day when our little informant alighted on the cross-beam of the shaft windlass. After inspecting the surface operations the rev. gentleman came to the mouth of the shaft, and expressed a desire to descend. With rough courtesy his wish was at once acceded to, and, placed in the mud bucket, he was lowered a distance of 80 feet to the bottom of the pit. After remaining there as long as he thought necessary, he stepped into the bucket for the return journey. Slowly the bucket rose from the ground, and ominously creaking and grating, it was drawn about half-way up the shaft, when a sudden stoppage took place. In alarm, the rev. gentleman called out, "Hallo, what's the matter up there?" "Matter!" roughly came from the lips of a burly navvy looking down from above; "Why we want your footin', to be sure." "Footing, indeed! Here, pull me up. Don't you know I am

a director. I will report you." "Director be blawed; you don't cum oop here 'til you ha' paid." The prisoner invoked his powers, both as a magistrate and a director, and thought he had succeeded in his object as the bucket again slowly ascended. When however, it had reached sufficiently near the surface to give the captive a better view of liberty, with another jerk the bucket came to a standstill, and the obstinate novice had an unpleasant consciousness that the depth below him had been considerably increased. A little more storming and a little further show of obstinacy ended in an attempt at compromise, but the captors were relentless unless half-a-sovereign was handed over to them as a "footin'." The mention of the ransom further incensed the prisoner, but after striving in vain to beat down the price, he was constrained to tell his merciless tormentors that he had nothing less than a sovereign. The navvies thought that would do "werra weel" and refused all promises of future payment. Slowly he was again raised until he could hand the coin to the men above, and having done so he was at length released. No sooner was he on terra firma than the "director" and the "magistrate" again reasserted themselves, but without avail. The sovereign was soon melted and drunk, and the Rev. Mr. — journeyed home a wiser, though a poorer man. In justice to intending visitors to Andoverford, we ought to add a "moral" to the tale of our feathered correspondent. Gentlemen, when embarking on novel enterprises should take care to ascertain the price of their "footin'" beforehand; otherwise a reverend or respectable appearance may be an expensive commodity, and the presiding genii of the place may use the words which our correspondent overheard used to the director, "It beant of'n we catch a gentelman loikee." What they do with such gentlemen when they do catch them the Rev. Mr. — will best tell.

"WHAT pity you are not a mirror!" said somebody to a young lady. "Why so?" "Because you would be such a good looking lass!"

A HEALTHY old gentleman was once asked by the king, what physician and apothecary he made use of, to look so well at his time of life? "Sir," replied the gentleman, "my physician has always been a horse, and my apothecary a donkey."

A FAIR ARGUMENT.

Eugene: "Please give me a piece of your oak, Charley?"

Charley: "No, I won't—cause you asked for it."

Fred: "Well, I didn't ask for any, Charley."

Charley: "No, you didn't ask for any, cause you don't want any."

A naice cadet of the French navy asked his captain in what costume it was expected the middies were to appear at the Portsmouth rejoisings. "Tenne de Balles, my child," was the columbiarian reply.

Mr. ADAM SMITH, hearing a servant complain of a pain in his back, said to him, "The pain, John, is not in your back—it is in your mind." "Deed sir," replied John, "giv' ye'll tak' it out o' my back and pit it in my mind, Ise be singularly oblieged to ye."

CRICKET IN FRANCE.—Cham, in *Charivari*, sketches an enthusiastic cricketer, who exclaims, "At first your teeth and eyes are no doubt very much in the way in cricket; but when once the ball has knocked them out, you can give your undivided attention to the game." Another is interrupted as he takes his place before the wicket by a spectator who cries, "Stay one instant! Are you married? Have you any children? Is there nothing to bind you to life? No? Very well then, play away!"

COUNTING YOUR CHICKENS.—Among the novelties of the day, according to a contemporary, is a National Poultry Company. If they can combine their Poultry with Cheapside, in these days of bad beef, the energetic promoters may succeed beyond their most sanguine calculations.—*Fran.*

"TANT MEUX," as the publican said when he watered the beer.—*Punch.*

ANYTHING BUT A CHAMPION JOKE.—Tom King is announced at Scarborough. Flaccus, when he saw the placard, exclaimed with his usual readiness, "He's coming down to 'Spa' it, I suppose."—*Punch.*

CULINARY SECURITY.

Young Lady: "Dear me! How stupid! The cook has been and put two skewers in this hare. I wonder what that can be for?"

A Brute of a Brother: "Probably, my dear, to make skewer doubly skewered?" (*Exit, running.*)—*Punch.*

AN ATTRACTION IN THESE DAYS.—At a fashionable watering-place in the North, not twenty miles from Filey, outside the doors of the miserable Town Hall, where offenders are tried by magistrates in the morning, and audiences are still more severely tried by performers in the evening, we noticed the three

following placards:—"Mad Dogs."—"Cruelty to Animals."—"Gavazi." What between the first and third announcements, we did not in the least wonder at the fact mentioned in the second. Considering the heat of the weather, and that the "Caution" about muzzling was confined only to the dogs, it was not surprising that the few visitors, who ventured near the place, hurried on as quickly as possible. It was quite a panic in the town.—*Punch.*

PEDANTY OF THE PRESS.—Leader-writers delight in calling the murmur "the Rinderpest." What affection is this? Why resort to a German word, when there is a capital English term already at their fingers' ends? Like sensible fellows, if they wish to be understood, why don't they call it simply "the cattle-pest?"—*Punch.*

STATISTICS.

From a return issued it appears that in the seven months ended the 31st of July, as many as 129,082 clocks and 86,814 watches were imported free of duty.

INCREASED CONSUMPTION OF EGGS.—In the seven months ended the 31st of July last, as many as 284,706,240 eggs were imported, against 207,790,340 in the preceding year. In July last compared with the same month in the preceding year, the increase exceeded 8,000,000.

In the seven months ending July last, 127,020 cwt. of paper were brought into the United Kingdom from foreign countries. Belgium sends the largest quantity to our market, 65,911 cwt. of printing and writing paper having been supplied by that kingdom, besides 15,273 cwt. of rougher qualities. Holland comes next as regards quantity, and France follows, 18,935 cwt. of all kinds having been received from that country. There were 34,869 tons of rags and other materials for making paper brought into England in the first seven months of the current year.

PAYMENTS FOR WHEAT.—The value of the wheat imported in the first five months of this year was computed at 2,858,893l., as compared with 3,983,677l. in the corresponding period of 1864, and 4,561,548l. in the corresponding period of 1863. It appears probable, however, from the slight advance in prices, that this year's figures will now revive, as there will be a greater inducement to import. While we are on this subject, it may be interesting to recapitulate the payments made for wheat in the ten years ending 1864—1855, 9,679,578l.; 1856, 12,716,369l.; 1857, 9,668,099l.; 1858, 9,050,457l.; 1859, 8,713,582l.; 1860, 16,554,083l.; 1861, 19,051,465l.; 1862, 23,203,800l.; 1863, 12,015,006l.; and 1864, 10,674,664l.

It is said that the impression produced on the officers of the British fleet during their late visit to Cherbourg, is that the iron-shops at Portsmouth might be contained within the smallest basin in the Cherbourg Docks, while the building, refitting, and repairing works of the French Iron marine occupy a space of many acres. It is evident that large establishments for iron shipbuilding must for the future assume the most prominent position in British naval dockyards.

FAMINE IN JERUSALEM.—The devastations caused by the innumerable swarms of locusts which have invaded the Holy Land are such as no words can adequately describe. The green crops have been wholly devoured, and the trees stripped of leaves and fruit. The prices of the ordinary necessities of life are already doubled. The Bishop of Jerusalem is peculiarly pressed at this time by the arrival of 1,500 Jews from Morocco, who incessantly supplicate help from the head of the Christian Church there. Subscriptions are being solicited to meet the emergency.

THE CHICARRA, OR ANIMAL PLANT OF MEXICO.—One of the most curious entomological objects which has attracted the attention of naturalists travelling in Mexico is the curious insect of which the Indians, in the neighbourhood of Santiago and Canta call *chicarra*, and which is sometimes called the animal plant. It is so called from a peculiar excrescence starting from the head of the insect, the nature of which has given rise to much discussion. Some maintain that it is purely an animal product, supplied from the insect itself; others that it is a true plant, or vegetable substance, starting from the brain of the insect. The hypotheses are both wrong. The insect is a kind of grasshopper (*cicada plebeia*) in its larva state, and the excrescence which it bears, resembling a miniature branch of coral, is a vegetable parasite, a kind of fungus or mushroom, called by the botanists Hill and Watson *sphaeria et toronia solifera*. This is certainly a curious and interesting kind of parasite, but by no means singular in the history of the cryptogamia. Nearly all the mushrooms are parasites—that is to say, such as are developed on other organised bodies. Some attack or start from plants, others from animals.

Numerous examples might be quoted in illustration of this point. It is probable that, after being hatched from the egg, the larva of the grasshopper quits its cradle in the earth and seeks escape to the surface; the parasite in question, in the condition of a germ, becomes attached to its head and takes root there, as any ordinary vegetable in the soil. After transformation, this excrescence falls off, and the fully developed insect appears.

WE CANNOT ASHES RE-ILLUME.

We cannot ashes re-illume,
When once the fire has left them dead,
Nor to the flower recall its bloom,
When once its life has fled:

Visions of the Past seem to be,
Whose darkness mocks our memory.

So, when our earlier feelings fade,
And Love, a summer-bird, departs,
And vacant leaves the nest he made
Within our youthful hearts,

The fire, the life of fire, is o'er;
Its flowers are dead, and bloom no more.

We wake, as from a happy dream,
Into the common light of day;
Around is no unusual gleam—

Illusion fled with flying youth;
Nor longer fooled, we feel the truth.

All outward things may be as fair
As when at first they pleased our sight,
But gone is something from the air

That charmed us day and night:
We may grow wiser than before,
But that lost charm we still deplore.

Oh, dreams of love and poesy,
That quickened life's delightful prime,
How soon ye fade, and fail, and flee.

At the cold touch of Time!
Nor our weak pulses throb again
With your transporting joy and pain.

Well, be it so! The Past is past,
Is gone for ever—let it go!

Alas! there's nothing long will last
In earth's delusive show!

We cannot ashes re-illume;
The flower, once dead, no more will bloom.

W. L. S.

GEMS.

LET OUR MEANNESS BE OUR FOOTSTOOL, NOT OUR CUSHION.

MEN ARE NOT CONCEALED UNDER HABITS, BUT ARE REVEALED BY THEM; THEY ARE THEIR CLOTHES.

I BELIEVE EVEN THE BEST THINGS ARE NOT EQUAL TO THEIR FAIR.

THE PRESENT HOUR IS ALWAYS WEALTHIEST WHEN IT IS POORER THAN THE FUTURE ONES, AS THAT IS THE PLEASANTEST SITE WHICH AFFORDS THE PLEASANTEST PROSPECTS.

WHAT WEALTH IS IT TO HAVE SUCH FRIENDS THAT WE CANNOT THINK OF THEM WITHOUT ELEVATION! AND WE CAN THINK OF THEM ANY TIME AND ANYWHERE, AND IT COSTS NOTHING BUT THE LOFTY DISPOSITION.

MAN IS CONTINUALLY SAYING TO WOMAN, "WHY WILL YOU NOT BE MORE WISE?" WOMAN IS CONTINUALLY SAYING TO MAN, "WHY WILL YOU NOT BE MORE LOVING?" IT IS NOT IN THEIR WILLS TO BE WISE OR TO BE LOVING; BUT, UNLESS EACH IS BOTH WISE AND LOVING, THERE CAN BE NEITHER WISDOM NOR LOVE.

HOW SHALL WE EARN OUR BREAD IS A GRAVE QUESTION; YET IT IS A SWEET AND INVITING QUESTION. LET US NOT BE CONTENT TO GET OUR BREAD IN SOME GROSS, CARELESS, AND HASTY MANNER. SOME MEN GO A-HUNTING, SOME A-FISHING, SOME A-GAMING, SOME TO WAR; BUT NONE HAVE SO PLEASANT A TIME AS THEY WHO IN EARNEST SEEK TO EARN THEIR BREAD. NOT ONLY THE RAINBOW AND SUNSET ARE BEAUTIFUL, BUT TO BE FEED AND CLOTHED, SHELTERED AND WARMED AGAIN, ARE EQUALLY BEAUTIFUL AND INSPIRING.

HOW THE PUBLIC FUNDS ARE MANAGED.—HERE IS A CURIOUS PIECE OF EVIDENCE FROM THE REPORT OF THE COMMONS' SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, JUST MADE PUBLIC. THE GENTLEMAN UNDER EXAMINATION WAS AN EXPERIENCED MAN, MR. G. ARTHURTON, TREASURY AUDITOR AND AUDITOR OF THE CIVIL LIST, AND THE QUESTIONS ARE PUT BY AN EXPERIENCED MAN, SIR STAFFORD NORTH-COTE:—"Q. What steps are taken to see that moneys which ought to go into the Exchequer really go there? —A. That is difficult to say; I think there is some defect in the arrangements upon that point. Q. Has your attention been called to the circumstance that in the case of Mr. Edmunds certain payments which ought to have been made regularly to the Exchequer were not made for years together? —A. Yes. Q. Is there no machinery by which it would be ascertained

that moneys which ought to be regularly paid once a year, or at other periods, have not been paid? —A. No, there is no such machinery. Q. Do you consider that there is any department of the Government which is in any way responsible for seeing that the payments to the Exchequer generally are properly made? —A. There is no officer generally responsible for it. Q. Then you think that the responsibility rests in each case upon the office which is ordered by an Act of Parliament to make its payments into the Exchequer? —A. Unless other provision is made. Q. Are there any instances in which other provision is made? —A. No; except in offices in which Commissioners of Audit may have cognizance of it. Q. Do you not think it would be right, for the security of the public revenue, that some department of Government should be charged with the duty of seeing that the payments which are ordered to be made to the public are made in due course? —A. Certainly, I think so. Q. What department do you think could undertake it? —A. The Commissioners of Audit if the accounts could be properly brought under their cognizance. It should be explained that if accounts are sent to the Audit Board by the Government for what is called an "administrative audit," and not an "appropriation audit"—that is to say, only to ascertain that money has been spent in accordance with Treasury directions, and not that it has been spent in accordance with the directions given by Parliament—the Audit Board would never think of pointing out to the Treasury that they (the Treasury) had authorized an expenditure which Parliament had refused to sanction. If the Audit Board did so, the Treasury would tell them, rather sharply, to mind their own business.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE STANDING ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES IS TO BE 177,000 MEN.

THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT HAVE DETERMINED THAT NO SINGLE HEAD OF CATTLE SHALL LEAVE A RUSSIAN PORT WITHOUT EXAMINATION AND A CERTIFICATE OF HEALTH.

THE CZAR HAS SENT TO MAJOR-GENERAL CZARNAJEW, THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF TURKESTAN, A GOLDEN SWORD OF HONOUR, STUDED WITH BRILLIANTS, WITH THE INSCRIPTION, "FOR THE CAPTURE OF TASCHKEND."

A WEALTHY OLD MAN, JUST DECEASED IN PARIS, LEFT A HUNDRED THOUSAND FRANCS TO A YOUNG MAN WHO POLITELY GAVE UP HIS SEAT TO HIM ONE NIGHT AT THE CROWDED OPERA.

A SWORDFISH WAS RECENTLY HARPOONED OFF CAPE ELIZABETH, WHICH MEASURED FOURTEEN FEET IN LENGTH, AND WEIGHED SEVEN HUNDRED POUNDS. HIS SWORD WAS THREE FEET TEN INCHES LONG.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON HAS VISITED THE EXHIBITION OF INDUSTRIAL FINE ARTS AT PARIS, AND HAS OFFERED HIS MAGNIFICENT COLLECTION OF ARMOUR, CONSISTING OF SIXTY BREASTPLATES AND A GREAT NUMBER OF PANOPRIES, AS AN ADDITION TO THE EXHIBITION.

IT HAS BEEN CALCULATED THAT AS THE DUCHY OF LAUENBURG CONTAINS 50,000 INHABITANTS, AND IT HAS BEEN Ceded TO PRUSSIA FOR SEVEN MILLIONS OF FRANCS, SHE HAS BOUGHT THE LAUENBERGERS AT THE RATE OF 140 FRANCS A HEAD.

THE TOWN OF FONDO, IN THE TYROL, HAS BEEN ALMOST ENTIRELY DESTROYED BY FIRE. 150 HOUSES HAVE BEEN BURNED, AND 300 FAMILIES ARE WITHOUT SHELTER. THE TOWN-HALL, THE CHURCH, AND A FEW HOUSES SITUATED ON AN ELEVATION, ESCAPED THE FLAMES. THE POOR PEASANTS HAVE ALSO LOST NEARLY ALL THE FORAGE FOR THEIR CATTLE.

A LIFE-SIZE STATUE OF NAPOLEON I., IN THE COSTUME OF THE SCHOOL OF BRIENNE, WHERE HE MADE HIS MILITARY STUDIES, HAS JUST BEEN PLACED IN THE NAPOLEON ROOM OF THE MUSEUM OF SOVEREIGNS AT THE LOUVRE. IT IS IN SILVER, AND HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE LOUVRE BY THE EMPEROR.

THE MASONIC GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND.—IN EIGHTY-THREE YEARS THE GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND HAS HAD BUT FOUR PRESIDING OFFICERS; THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND OCCUPIED THE PLACE FROM 1782 TO 1790; THE PRINCE OF WALES UNTIL 1813; THE DUKE OF SUSSEX UNTIL 1843; AND THE EARL OF ZETLAND TILL THE PRESENT TIME.

TWO MORE CROSSES OF HONOUR HAVING BEEN GIVEN TO ROSA BONHEUR, IT IS PROPOSED TO APPEND TO ROSA BONHEUR'S PICTURES IN THE NEXT EXHIBITION. "IT IS NOT PERMITTED TO HANG FOREIGN DECORATIONS ON THE FRAME OF THIS PICTURE, WHICH BELONGS TO ROSA BONHEUR, WHO SIMPLY DESIRES TO BE KNOWN AS ROSA BONHEUR, A FRENCHWOMAN."

LONDONERS ARE TO HAVE ANOTHER PARK, AND THAT IN A LOCALITY WHERE IT WILL BE AN IMMENSE BOON, THE SPOT SELECTED FOR IT BEING ROTHERHITH. ON THE 29TH OF LAST MONTH THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS ENTERED UPON POSSESSION, OR PAYMENT OF THE SUM OF £58,000. THE PARK ITSELF WILL OCCUPY ABOUT FORTY-FIVE ACRES, AND TWENTY MORE WILL BE TAKEN UP BY BUILDINGS AND A ROAD ROUND THE PARK.

CONTENTS.

THE STRANGER'S SECRET	705	A BALM FOR GRIM	726
LINA HERBERT	710	TEMPTATION	727
DREAMS OF CHILDHOOD	711	MOUNT BUFFALO HUNT	729
THE HEIRESS	711	THE RAVEN'S VOICE	730
A WINTER IN ITALY	712	SCIENCE	732
ALFRED THE GHOST	712	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES	732
THE TWO PORTRAITS	713	FAÇETTES	734
A CHILI INDIAN	718	STATISTICS	734
EVA ASHLEY	718	WE CANNOT ASKES RE-	735
SIR JOHN	721	ILLUME	735
FAREWELL TO SUMMER	724	GEMS	735
THE VILLAGE BEAUTY	724	MISCELLANEOUS	735

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DUE SPIRO, SPERO.—See reply to " Sadly Tormented" (No. 126.)

C. S. FEVER.—We cannot avail ourselves of the lines entitled "The Smiles," which are declined with thanks.

CLARIBEL.—We must beg to refer you to the notice at foot of this page respecting literary contributions.

BETA.—The 86th Regiment has returned to England from India. It is stationed at Devonport.

ROBERT J.—We are much obliged for your kind offer, which, however, we must decline.

MAUD.—The colour of the hair is dark brown. In a subsequent number we will give you the desired information respecting the date.

PRECIOUS STONES.—The work on this subject, to the extract from which we appended the name of the author, can be obtained by order of any bookseller.

CAROL.—You should get the desired information from a practical photographer. Theoretical knowledge would be of little or no use to you.

CARRIE HELSTON.—We regret that we cannot comply with your request; but tender our thanks for your kind offer.

CATHERINE STONE.—An infant may make a perfectly valid contract of marriage; and of course may sue for a divorce on sufficient grounds. We cannot recommend a legal adviser, it being contrary to our practice.

APPRENTICE.—A master cannot compel his apprentice to serve him as such after obtaining his twenty-first year; but he may compel him to make good lost time before rendering the indentures.

IGNORANCE.—It is pretty much a matter of individual taste as to which finger an engagement ring should be worn on. The third finger of the right hand, however, is the one on which it is generally placed.

AN UNHAPPY GIRL.—We much regret that we cannot assist you; as an ordinary depilatory for the removal of superfluous hair would under the circumstances probably be useless.

MARIAN F. would not object to receive the addresses of a young gentleman about her own age, which is sixteen, with a view to a matrimonial engagement. Is rather below the medium height, and has an amiable and loving disposition.

J. AND E.—You have not stated whether you desire to obtain "assisted passages" or not. But in any case the required information can be readily obtained from the advertisement columns of the daily and weekly papers.

R. H.—You should refuse to receive the word if you did not engage to take it; and let the book-hawker go for his remedy to the county court, if he thinks he can get any thing by doing so.

JNO. GAMMELL.—The question has been twice answered: once under your signature, and once under that of another correspondent. The marriage of cousins would be quite legal.

EMMA.—In general, perspiration is not injurious, but the reverse. The excessive perspiration, however, in your case, denotes great constitutional weakness, and you should consult a medical man for a remedy. (See also reply to "Apprentice.")

M. A. Y., who is thirty years of age, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, of dark complexion, with dark hair and eyes, and is of a kind and affectionate disposition, would be happy to correspond matrimonially with a respectable tradesman between thirty and forty years of age.

J. LEWIS JONES.—Children born out of matrimony are not entitled to inherit any property, personal or otherwise, of their father. In the case stated, the daughter being the only child born in wedlock, will be entitled to the property jointly with the mother.

FLORA AND ANNIE would like to correspond matrimonially with two young gentlemen, who must be tall, dark and physically good-looking. "Flora," who is eighteen years of age, is of medium height, and fair. Both would make very domesticated wives. (The handwriting is of average merit.)

COTTAGER ANNIE, who is a widow, of a cheerful and domesticated disposition, having a comfortable home and a moderate income, but feels lonely, would prefer re-entering the state of matrimony with a gentleman of a kindred disposition, with small independent income.

ESTHER A.—Elderly maids deprived of colour, by being kept in the dark. Celery, sea-kale, and some other plants are purposely blanched or etiolated by excluding them from the light, thus preventing the formation of chlorophylle, the green colouring matter of leaves.

IDA McGREGOR, who is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, has blue eyes, dark brown hair, very fair complexion, and a good figure, would be happy to correspond with any gentleman who is in a good position, gentlemanly looking, and able to keep his wife in respectability. He must, moreover, be tall, but may be either dark or fair.

EMMELINE and LOUISE wish to correspond matrimonially with two young gentlemen. "Emmeline" is seventeen years of age, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, with dark hair, blue eyes, and fair complexion; is very good tempered and affectionate, considered highly accomplished, and possesses an income of £200 a year. "Louise" who is eighteen years of age, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, of fair complexion, with light grey

eyes, golden hair, graceful figure, is very pretty, good tempered and lively in disposition, and possesses an income of £200 a year, is willing to bestow a loving heart on any gentleman who may feel disposed to woo her and win it.

C. P. A.—There should be no hesitation on the part of a gentleman to return the letters of a lady with whom he is no longer in correspondence. Promptitude indeed in doing this "marks the gentleman—want of it the fellow." You should send an imperative demand to have them returned before giving up his.

VIOLA ALBA.—To a correspondent who recently addressed us a similar inquiry to yours, we replied that we give all MSS. a fair and impartial consideration. We can do no more; and it is our rule, as constantly stated at foot of this page, that authors must send their MSS. subject to the condition therein specified.

CARRIE and ANNIE wish to meet with two respectable young bachelors who are anxious to marry. "Carrie" is of the middle height, and rather dark complexion. "Annies" is rather below the medium height, and of rather dark complexion. They are both very domesticated, and promise to make careful and affectionate wives.

LOUISA and SELINA wish to correspond matrimonially with two gentlemen, who must be tall and dark, and possibly good-looking. "Louisa," who is twenty years of age, is fair; and "Selina," who is eighteen, is dark. Both are considered very pretty, are very domesticated, and would make good loving wives.

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL.

There are more sights than eye can see,
More sounds than ear can hear,
Sweet phantoms of the memory,
Which greet us everywhere.

We meet them in the glare of day,
We hear them in the night;
And subtler than a fabled ray,
They fit before our sight.

'Tis not a poet's dream, I know,
That pictures things divine,
All have their guardian spirits, I trow—
I feel that I have mine.

Sometimes she leads me by the hand,
Where daisy buttons grow;

Then down upon the golden sand,
Her tiny footstep goes.

Anon a hat and cloak she wears,
And shakes a mass of curly hair,
And then, with eyes suffused with tears,
I kiss all little girls.

At other seasons she will come
In pure celestial white—
Then heaven is found within my home,
And faith gives place to sight.

EDWARD C.

W. D. R., a widower (of middle age, with an only son), who has some means, and is in a good position, is temperate in habits, and affectionate in disposition, desires to correspond with a view to an early matrimonial engagement, with a lady of suitable means, who is amiable in disposition, and would endeavour to make home comfortable and happy.

M. F. would be happy to correspond matrimonially with a young gentleman, who need not be absolutely good-looking, but would undertake to make a loving husband. "M. F." is 5 ft. 4 in. in height, with dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, is considered handsome, and feels sure she would make a very loving wife. At the death of an uncle "M. F." will receive £3,000 per annum.

UNCOMFORTABLE, who is an engineer, desires to correspond with a young lady, with a view to speedy matrimony. Is twenty-seven years of age, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, good-looking, and of kind disposition. Being possessed of nearly £1,000, the young lady should have a little money. A young widow without family not objected to; and would like to hear from "M. U." (No. 122.)

CHARLFONTE is anxious to abjure single blessedness, and therefore is desirous of obtaining a matrimonial introduction to a lady possessing good looks and a sweet temper. Is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft. 11 in. in height, fair, with a light moustache and blue eyes, and handsome and military looking; is studying for the law, and in receipt of a good income, and also in expectation of a really ample fortune.

HORACE F., who is twenty-seven years of age, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, with dark brown hair, and slight moustache, energetic, and considered rather good-looking, wished to correspond matrimonially with a lady about twenty-three years of age, who is good tempered, of loving disposition, tolerably educated, very domesticated, and, in short, qualified to make home happy. If with an annual income, preferred.

C. B. A. is a Colesha who is very anxiously searching for a wife. *Imprints*, the lady must be a widow, amiable and well educated, have a gentle, loving, and agreeable disposition; be prepossessing in appearance, and, possessing these qualities, need not have any money, as it is no object. "C. B. A." is thirty-three years of age, tall and dark, and considered handsome, has a large yearly income, and is affectionate in disposition.

CURIOUS INQUIRER.—The retiring pension of Lord Cranworth is £5,000 a year. You are under a mistaken impression, however, in supposing that his lordship, whilst executing the office of Lord Chancellor, to which he has been conditionally re-appointed, receives this in addition to his official salary, which is about £12,000 a year. When his lordship retires again from office, his pension, which has now, of course, ceased, will revive.

LONGLY EMILY will be glad to receive matrimonial overtures from a gentleman. Is eighteen years of age, 4 ft. 11 in. in height, has dark brown hair, light blue eyes, and fair complexion, and considered to be pretty; has received a good plain English education, is thoroughly domesticated, and of lively disposition; and would prefer to exchange *cartes*, &c., with a tall, dark gentleman; intellectuality being preferred to a merely handsome face. (The handwriting is good and ladylike.)

F. P. W.—The Princess of Wales has six names, not seven, viz., Alexandra Caroline Mary Charlotte Louise Julian; and it is a curious fact that one or more of Her Royal Highness's names attaches to each of the Queen's Consort

of England since the Revolution. Thus King William III's consort (though also regnant) was Mary; George II's consort was Wilhelmina Charlotte Caroline; George III's, Sophie Charlotte; George IV's, Caroline Amelia Elizabeth; and William IV's, Adelaide Louisa Theresa Caroline Amelie.

EMILIE, ANNETTE, and GRACE, three young ladies of the fair city of Cork, wish to change their state of single blessedness for the estate of matrimony. "Emilie" is eighteen years of age, a brunette, and considered good-looking. "Annette" is seventeen years of age, a blonde, and highly accomplished. "Grace" is twenty-one years of age, fair, accomplished and domesticated. They would prefer to correspond and exchange *cartes* with three young gentlemen belonging to the same class.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

MATRIMONIAL will be happy to hear further from "May B." and "Jenny," whose *cartes de visite*, &c., are requested.

E. D. will be very happy to correspond matrimonially and exchange *cartes*, &c., with "Helen."

BONA FRIDE thinks "Madeline" would suit him as a wife; and if her expectations are not above a person in his position, will be most happy to exchange *cartes* as a preliminary.

GROZIA, a dark young gentleman, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, will be happy to correspond matrimonially with "Hettie" or receiving further particulars with *carte de visite*.

A BACHELOR will be happy to correspond matrimonially with "Laura," from whom he would like to hear further before exchanging *cartes*.

MINNIE will be happy to hear further from "Neptuna" is twenty-one years of age, rather petite, and good-looking; and is confident that as a wife she could make "Neptuna" home very comfortable.

W. B. is desirous of entering into a matrimonial correspondence with "Hettie." Is twenty-one years of age and good, good tempered, fond of music, and has a very good income.

BELPERION comes to the rescue of "Madeline," to whom he would be happy to become a devoted husband. Is thirty-two years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, with blue eyes and fair complexion; but has no fortune but his profession.

HARRY W. will be happy, if "J. G. G." will favour him with a view to matrimony, with her *carte de visite*, as she has not given many personal particulars. "Harry W." is young in years, and in appearance homely, not tall (ay medium size) and of dark complexion.

W. F. T. begs to become further acquainted with "Alice," with a view to a matrimonial engagement. Is in a comfortable position in life, of middle stature, twenty-six years of age, passable in looks, and considered a good companion and friend; and begs to solicit her *carte*.

M. W. G. and L. T. M. would like to open a matrimonial correspondence with "E. G." and "A. S." "M. W. G." is eighteen years of age, has dark hair and eyes, and is considered good-looking. "L. T. M." is just seventeen years of age, is also dark complexioned, and of a lively disposition.

ANGELO S. has been so taken with the pen-portrait of "Madeline," that he is anxious to conduct her to the matrimonial altar. Is twenty-four years of age, an artist by profession, with some reputation, and brilliant prospects, and is considered handsome, clever, amiable, and musical.

MYRA declares herself to be exactly the kind of person for whom "C. H. O." is seeking as a wife, and thinks "C. H. O." the beau ideal of a husband—for whom," says Myra, "I have been looking long enough." But "C. H. O." must communicate his matrimonial intentions quickly, "else," adds Myra, decisively, "I will be gone."

J. T. M. will be most happy to correspond with "Madeline," with a view to matrimony. Is twenty-three years of age, fair complexion, with fawn hair, light beard, and regular features; is of medium height, passionately fond of music, possesses a good temper, and lively disposition; is well connected, but nevertheless believes that

"'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And noble deeds than Norman blood."

J. W. B. M. would be happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with "Annie," to whom he offers himself as a husband. Is twenty-seven years of age, 5 ft. 7 in. in height, of fair complexion, very fond of music, and in business with his father. His offer in default of "Annie's" acceptance, applies to any other lady.

MERCIA will be happy to exchange *cartes* and open a matrimonial correspondence with either "Emmeline" or "Madeline." Is twenty-six years of age, 6 ft. in height, dark in complexion, has nearly £2000 per annum, with moderate expectations, and is very anxious to give up "single blessedness."

T. H. M. will be happy to correspond with either "Alice" or "Hettie," with a view to matrimony. Is nearly thirty years of age, 5 ft. 11 in. in height, with fresh complexion, dark brown hair, whiskers and moustache; is of kind disposition, very temperate and steady; has an income of £300 per annum, and belongs to an ancient and respectable family.

HARRY GRAHAM and GEORGE ELPIAC wish to correspond matrimonially or exchange *cartes* with "Alice" and "Hettie." "Harry" is twenty years of age, and offers himself to "Hettie." Is of dark complexion, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, with black hair and moustache; has a small income, and as twenty-one will succeed to a first-class business. "George" offers himself to "Alice." Is twenty years of age, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, fair complexion, of highly respectable family, and will come into some property when of age.

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